

THE ROLE OF
SCHOOL CULTURE IN THE
CAREER ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATORS: A CASE STUDY

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Submitted to the Faculty of the
Graduate College of the
Oklahoma State University
In partial fulfillment of
The requirements for the Degree of
DOCTOR OF EDUCATION
August, 2016

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

I would like to acknowledge the love of my life, my brother, Christopher Grooms, who always believed in me and was the smartest person I have ever known. I would also like to acknowledge my parents, David and LaVonda Grooms, who always created a space for me to achieve my goals, a path for me to follow my dreams even when the path became too rough to navigate. I also want to acknowledge my brother Jon Grooms who always teased me about how long my doctorate process took. Little did he know, those comments helped keep me going. I would also like to acknowledge my husband Timothy DeCasper for never interrupting me during my studies and allowing chart paper with 3 x 5 index cards to be posted all over our house for the sake of research. My best friend Jenn Howell must also be acknowledged for her commitment and help she gave me when I was diagnosed with Breast Cancer.

Finally, I would like to acknowledge my friend and advisor, Dr. Edward Harris without whom I would never have accomplished this level of education. My first semester in the program, I was still a teacher despite the fact everyone else in my cohort were either principals or superintendents. Dr. Harris believed in me and mentored me throughout the whole seven-year process-- laughing at my jokes, teaching me the merits of editing, and always encouraging me. He has become like family to me, and I will always be grateful to him.

Acknowledgements reflect the views of the author and are not endorsed by committee members or Oklahoma State University.

Name: REBECCA GROOMS

Date of Degree: AUGUST, 2016

Title of Study: THE ROLE OF SCHOOL CULTURE IN THE CAREER
ADVANCEMENT OF EDUCATORS: A CASE STUDY

Major Field: SCHOOL ADMINISTRATION

Abstract: The purpose of this study was to explain, through the lens of Grid and Group Theory, how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators. In this qualitative study, purposeful sampling was used to select three school sites within the district as information-rich sources of data due to each school's unique categorization as a corporate, collectivist, and bureaucratic environment. Using the case study model of inquiry, data collection occurred through surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis. Participants included parents, educators, deans, assistant principals, principals, and one executive director. Surveys were interpreted through Douglas' (1982) grid and group framework to gain a better understanding of the cultural context of the school environments. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with deans, assistant principals, principals, and one executive director. Document analysis completed the data collection experience and included public documents, electronic communication, and school websites. All data were coded according to emerging themes, patterns, and relationships. Triangulation, purposive sampling, member checking, and access to an audit trail were utilized to validate the findings in this study. Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Typology were applied after data were collected. The findings in this study indicated specific patterns were present in each cultural environment, viewed through the lens of grid and group theory (Douglas, 1970), that promoted and inhibited the career advancement of educators. This research will inform schools and districts across the nation regarding the types of environments most conducive to career advancement. This knowledge can also be utilized by university programs, school districts, administrators, educators, and school personnel to better support the career advancement of educators through cultural aspects embedded within school environments.

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CHAPTER I

INTRODUCTION

Since the passage of the Equal Employment Opportunity Act, educational institutions have been encouraged to improve hiring and promotion practices for all groups of people. Research indicates that strides have been made in this area but there is still much to be done (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Dean, 2013; Pirouznia, 2009).

In Oklahoma, achieving principal licensure requires a master degree, two successful years of classroom teaching, and passage of principal certification tests. Considering the common door through which most educators enter, advancement in the school systems should seem inevitable. Many times this is not the case. The typical advancement strategy in school systems is a progression of teacher, dean/assistant principal, principal, central office administration, and superintendent. However, some individuals do not advance or individuals progress through an atypical career pathway. In some cases, individuals navigate the progression from educator to principal in 3-5 years, while other individuals may spend 5-10 years as an assistant principal.

While there have been studies that address these problems in advancement, researchers contend there is still much to be done (Cabrera & Thomas-Hunt, 2007; Grant, 2008; Hamilton, 2009; Hancock,

2012; Pirouznia, 2009; Kim & Brunner, 2009; Kruger, 2008; Linehan, 2001; Lui & Wilson; 2001; Simmons, 2009). This study addressed the following problem.

Problem Statement

State and national initiatives have been put in place to promote nondiscriminatory employment and advancement opportunities for all citizens. Despite these concerted efforts, some professional workplaces appear more discriminatory than others. For example, in the workplace of some school systems, the makeup of school leaders is disproportionate to teacher demographics (Blount, 1998; Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Dean, 2010; Pirouznia, 2006).

One possible reason for the difference in career advancement among educators is the culture of the school environment (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Grant, 2008; Hancock, 2012; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Morgan 2006; Schein, 2001). Context and culture are relationally symbiotic in school settings; therefore, a school's culture could manifest cultural conditions that hinder or promote advancement (Harris, 2005, 2015).

Douglas's grid and group typology (1982) has been used to explain culture in a variety of settings (Coc, 2013; Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Kautz, 2008; Limwudhikraijirath, 2009; Murer, 2002; Purvis, 1998; Smith, 2009; Spitzer, 2009; Waelateh, 2009; White, 2013). Douglas described four quadrants of social contexts: bureaucratic, corporate, individualist, and collectivist. Cultural elements embedded in each grid and group makeup create certain conditions that foster and prevent advancement for individuals within the environment (Anfara & Mertz, 2006; Douglas, 1970, 1996; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Spickard, 1989). For this reason, Douglas's (1982) Cultural Typology was used to explore career advancement in the context of culture.

Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explain, through the lens of grid and group theory, how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators.

Research Questions

The core questions that guided this research were:

1. How does the cultural context of the school promote and inhibit the advancement of educators?
2. What role, if any, does cultural preference play in career advancement?
3. How can educators adapt or align their advancement efforts according to their school's distinct cultural environment?
4. What other findings relative to the research purpose exist outside of the grid and group framework?

Theoretical Framework

The philosophical worldview that will provide direction to this qualitative study is constructionism. The constructionism epistemological stance holds that reality is relative to how humans construct meaning from the world around them (Creswell, 2009). In this philosophical worldview, meaning is constructed through experiences. The qualitative approach to this research provided a flexible emergent design that guided and developed the study as well as offered a worldview to explore the issue being studied through the scope of the researcher's own perspectives, biases, and experiences (Erlandson, Harris, Skipper, & Allen, 1993).

Douglas's (1982) typology of grid and group was used to explain the cultural context of schools. Looking through this lens narrows the broad landscape of culture to focus on context within a school and how this cultural context explains career advancement (Harris, 2015).

Douglas's theory was applied after data were collected and themes emerged through analysis strategies. When applied to school culture, grid and group theory was useful in explaining patterns of behavior and social interactions within an educational environment bounded by the cultural constructs of rules, roles, and group dynamics. In addition, this framework allows researchers to observe school culture through a holistic lens in relation to social interactions and the structures that govern those interactions.

Utilizing Douglas's (1982) typology of grid and group provided structure to research experiences and helped guide how research was conducted and presented. The typology provided an effective operative lens to view school culture. According to Harris, (2015) the typology: (a) provides a matrix to classify school contexts; (b) draws specific observations about individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviors; (c) is designed to take into account the total social environment as well as interrelationships among school members and their context; and (d) explains how constructed contextual meanings are generated and transformed (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Procedures

Case study methodology was used in this study. Purposeful sampling was used to select three to four school sites within the district as information-rich sources of data due to each school's unique categorization as a corporate, collectivist, individualist, and bureaucratic environment.

Participants included educators, parents, deans, assistant principals, executive directors, and principals. To gain understanding of the grid and group make-up of the three to four school environments, surveys were constructed and analyzed according to Douglas's framework. Semi-structured interviews were conducted with educators, deans, parents, assistant principals, executive directors, and principals. Interviews shed light on culture in each particular school setting. Participant observation strategies and document analysis, including data collection experiences, electronic

communication, and school websites were utilized. All data were coded according to emerging themes, patterns, and relationships. One of the cornerstones of the qualitative collection process is the interaction of data collection and data analysis (Erlandson, et al., 1993). Data analysis coincided with data collection during several processes such as coding, transcribing, identifications of emergent patterns and themes, selection of interview topics, purposeful selection of interview participants, and heuristic refinement of data. To assist in the data collection process I kept an audit trail that documented my process and experiences during the six month data collection period.

Data needed for this study included information gathered from a modified version of Harris's (2015) Cultural Preference Assessment Tool (see Appendix E) and Cultural Assessment Tool (see Appendix D). The Cultural Assessment Tool was used to identify school environments according to Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology. From the analysis of the Cultural Assessment Tool, four schools were selected based upon a bureaucratic, collectivist, individualist, or corporate classification. After each site was selected, school administrators including deans at each site completed the Cultural Preference Assessment Tool to determine the preferential work environment of each participant. Interviews commenced with educators, parents, and school administrators to illuminate culture within each environment. All data were collected and analyzed to fulfill the purpose of this research.

Purposive sampling, triangulation, member checking, and access to an audit trail were utilized to validate the findings in this study. Purposive sampling was implemented through the purposeful selection of school sites and participants. Triangulation verified data through the use of multiple methods of data collection. Surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis data were collected to meet the threshold of data verification. Member checking occurred during interviews through informal data checking. The final technique utilized to validate findings was access to an audit

trail. All of these strategies helped establish trustworthiness by providing credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Erlandson et al., 1993).

Significance of the Study

To Practice

The typical advancement strategy in school systems is a progression of teacher, dean/ assistant principal, principal, central office administration, and superintendent; however, problems exist in this progression, and individuals do not advance. Because school administrators play a significant role in the success of schools hiring, promoting, and supporting effective leaders should be a top priority for schools and school districts. Utilizing Douglas's (1982) typology, Harris provided culture as an explanation for why some individuals advance in certain environments, while others may not. Explaining advancement through the lens of culture informed schools and districts across the nation regarding the types of environments most conducive to career advancement. In addition, this knowledge can be utilized by university programs, school districts, administrators, and school personnel to better support the career advancement of educators through the cultural context of the school environment. Finally, this research helped educators understand the environment in which they work and how they can adapt their advancement efforts to align with their specific environment in order to advance.

To Research

The study of a school's cultural context and the role it plays in the promotion or hindrance of the career advancement of educators, defined here through the grid and group typology, is important for several reasons. Developing school culture as a valid research paradigm in educational literature helped expand the singular view of culture typically applied in educational settings. Broadly, this study added to the limited lexicon used to describe organizational culture within schools while developing an understanding of the issue within a broader base of research. Specifically, the findings of this study

could be applied in a variety of organizational research settings in an effort to understand the role contextual culture plays in the career advancement of employees. In addition, the results of this research provided a research model of cultural environments which are conducive to the career advancement of educators.

To Theory

This study utilized Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group theory to understand the interrelationship between cultural context and career advancement and to provide a cultural lexicon to describe this interrelationship. This study showed the usefulness of grid and group theory for understanding the role school culture played in the career advancement of educators. Moreover, utilizing Douglas's grid and group theory as a lens to view school culture bolstered this framework's viability in researching school culture.

Definition of Terms

Authoritarianism. The social game or lever embedded within the bureaucratic context. Authoritarianism promotes limited opportunity for advancement, compliance with rules and procedures, limited control of school goals and rewards by teachers, and autocratic rule by administrators. (Anfara & Mertz, 2006, p.136)

Bureaucratic Environment. The bureaucratic environment represents a strong-grid, weak-group context. This type of environment is rigid and hierarchical based on individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background. Max Weber's model of bureaucracy consists of five central principles one would expect to find in a bureaucratic organization including: (a) fixed division of labor; (b) hierarchy of offices; (c) general rules that govern performance; (d) separation of personal and official property and rights; (e) personnel selected based on technical qualifications; and (f) employment of members is seen as a life-long career (Scott & Davis, 2006, p. 48).

Bureaucratic Mind-set. For the purposes of this research, “bureaucratic mind-set” is characterized by authoritarian leadership style, willingness to advance horizontally from school to school, competitive nature, and reliance upon individual qualifications and attributes to advance in an organization.

Collectivist Environment. The collectivist context is characterized by a weak-grid, strong-group environment. The *social game* associated with this environment is “Egalitarianism.” Cooperation, group goals, and teacher autonomy embodies collectivist school environments (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Collectivist Mind-set. For the purposes of this study, the “collectivist mind-set” represents a culture of learning, building teacher capacity and efficacy, and willingness to compete for internal advancement opportunities.

Corporate Environment. The corporate cultural context can be described as a strong-grid, strong-group environment. Harris (2015) builds on this description and notes that this type of context is a bounded entity with individual members existing according to their allegiance and commitment to the group. Control of the individual member is exerted through the advancement of the group. Hierarchy and position hold power in the corporate environment (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Corporate Mind-Set. For the purposes of this study, a “corporate mind-set” is characterized by an understanding that the principal is the ultimate authority at the site and internal advancement to this position would not be likely and therefore, administrators are content in supporting this position rather than advancing to it. Advancement within current role is as important as moving into the principal role. Loyalty to the school and the group provides the paradigm in which the mind-set rests.

Cosmologies. Douglas cogitates the development of cosmologies are a result of shared experiences common among group members which dictates social structure. These shared experiences

then become a predictable pattern of behavior and reasoning all members from the culture share (Spickard, 1989).

Cultural Preference. The term cultural preference has been referred to as “social game” or “cultural bias” by some grid and group proponents. Cultural preference describes the dominant grid and group patterns and behaviors embedded within culture that over time, individuals prefer over other patterns. Moreover, these preferences can be characterized as the prevalent ideology that cultivates over time within a cultural context (Harris, 2015). Preferences can be viewed as levers, or the operational action implication of the grid and group continuum of strength (Hopkins, 2005). For the purposes of this study, the term cultural preference will be predominantly used, but occasionally be interchanged with the term social games.

Egalitarianism. “Egalitarianism” is the social game or lever embedded within the collectivist context. “Egalitarianism” places a high value on unity, equal distribution of teaching supplies and space, suspicious of those outside the school community who may want to help, conformity to the norms of the group, as well as rejection of authoritarian leadership and hierarchy” (Anfara & Mertz, 2006, p. 136).

Grid. Harris (2015) contends, the grid feature of Douglas’s typology is the degree in which individuals within a group are constrained by structural and/or functional mechanisms embedded within the cultural environment. The grid mechanism exists on a continuum of strength designated weak to strong. Weak-grid environments support individual autonomy, loosely defined rules and roles, and distributed power and authority among members. Inversely, strong-grid environments confine individual autonomy, clearly define rules and roles, and distribute power and authority among few members (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Group. The group feature of Douglas's (1982) typology is the degree in which individuals appreciate and rely on group associations and are committed to the group as a whole. The group mechanism exists on a continuum of strength ranked weak to strong. Weak-group environments support low-group commitment, few social interactions, weak affinity toward group and group goals, and self-preservation. Conversely, strong-group environments support high-group commitment, many social interactions, strong affinity toward group and group goals, and group-preservation (Harris, 2015).

Hierarchy. The social game or lever embedded within the corporate context (Harris, 2015).

Individualist Environment. The individualist environment can be characterized as a weak-grid, weak-group environment. Self-preservation, competition, and individual achievement are characteristics associated with this type of environment (Harris, 2015).

Individualism. The social game or lever embedded within the individualist environment. Individualism supports autonomy, competition, and self-preservation (Harris, 2015).

Lever. For the purposes of this study, social games will be described as *levers*, or the operational action implication of the grid and group continuum of strength (Hopkins, 2005).

Mechanism. For the purposes of this study, *mechanisms* of culture will be described as grid and group dimensions of Douglas's typology (Hopkins, 2005).

Mode. The *mode* of the cultural context is a malleable dimension of schooling. For the purposes of this study, the mode will be operationalized as one of the four cultural environments in the grid and group typology (Hopkins, 2005).

Organizational Culture. Bedeian (1991) defines organizational cultures as "social entities that are goal directed, deliberately structured activity systems with permeable boundary" (p.88 [Electronic version]). In Bedeian's description, "social entities that are goal directed" represents the shared, social identity of the group as actors in the organization each playing a part and fulfilling a role. This depiction

represents the grid continuum of Douglas's (1982) typology. The latter part of the definition describes organizational culture as having a "permeable boundary." This concept represents flexibility in the roles and responsibilities within each environment. These conceptual boundaries represent the group scale of the cultural organization. Existing on a continuum, the group dimension shows permeability of boundaries and the grid dimension is able to shift roles and responsibilities because both units exist within the conceptual framework.

Summary and Organization of the Study

The purpose of this study was to explain, through the lens of grid and group theory, how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators. To facilitate this purpose, this study was structured in six chapters. In addition to this chapter, Chapter II provided a detailed rendering of literature. Topics addressed in Chapter II included: Equal Employment Opportunity Act and how it relates to the educational environment, reasons some administrators advance and some do not, factors contributing to career advancement, barriers to career advancement, cultural perspectives explaining organizational culture and career advancement, school culture and career advancement, and the development and implementation of Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Theoretical Framework.

Chapter III delivered a comprehensive explanation of the methodology and procedures this study employed. Qualitative case study methodology was the research design that guided this study. Detailed descriptions of participant selection, data collection, and data analysis methods were offered. Strategies for validating findings, the researcher's role in data gathering, and limitations to the study completed Chapter III.

Chapter IV presented each of the three cases selected for this study. Hudson High School, Brown High School, and Wilson Academy High School were described using thick, rich language and details in order to describe each case study in both historical and current perspectives.

Chapter V detailed a thorough analysis of the data and how the data collectively informed the research questions and overall purpose of the study.

Chapter VI summarized the study and provided conclusions, interpretations of data, and implications. Implications included how this study was significant to practice, to research, and to theory.

CHAPTER II

LITERATURE REVIEW

Chapter I described the purpose and scope of this research study. This chapter highlights scholarship relevant to culture and career advancement. Major topics include: (1) Equal Opportunity Employment Act and how it relates to the educational environment; (2) reasons for the variation in career advancement experiences among individuals; (3) cultural perspectives explaining career advancement; (4) school culture; and (5) Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Theory informing school culture. The purpose of this review is to illuminate the research problem and establish a need for this study.

Equal Employment Opportunity Act

State and National Initiatives

For decades, numerous policies and legislation have been enacted to advocate better hiring and promotion practices in public institutions across the nation. Moreover, Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was designed to protect employees from discrimination in hiring and promotion in the workplace on the basis of race, color, religion, sex, or national origin (Civil Rights Act of 1964). Many agencies have been created in this effort, including the U.S. Equal Employment Opportunity Commission, the Office of Civil Rights, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs, and the U.S. Merit Systems Protection Board ("Teaching with Documents" n.d.). The variety and magnitude of

initiatives enacted to promote nondiscriminatory employment and advancement opportunities reflect concerted efforts made at many levels to promote all people regardless of age, gender, race, and ethnicity in the workplace.

Affirmative action plans. In 1965, to further supplement Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed an executive order which mandated federal contractors to establish affirmative action plans outlining strategies to increase the number of women and minorities in their workplace. Plans were to include: (a) an equal opportunity policy statement; (b) workforce analysis by race, sex, and ethnicity; (c) identification of problem areas in workforce diversity; (d) action plans to address problem areas; (e) specific programs designed to increase diversity in their workforce; and (f) evidence of a monitoring and reporting system designed to flag diversity violations (“Teaching,” n.d.). This executive order was and still is of paramount significance to public entities across the nation. For example, as a result of this mandate, public schools must create and adhere to affirmative action plans that increase diversity in their workforce. Moreover, school districts exceeding 50 members and receiving federal monies are mandated to promote outreach, recruitment, training, and educational efforts to expand the group of qualified applicants and to promote diversity. If districts fail to address diversity issues in their workforce, they could lose their federal funding. To ensure public institutions implemented these action plans, the Office of Federal Contract Compliance Programs was established in 1978. This agency protects job applicants and those currently employed at public institutions receiving federal monies against discrimination in hiring and promotion based on race, sex, or ethnicity (United States Department of Labor, n.d.).

Despite legislative initiatives and affirmative action plans aimed at increasing diversity in school systems, in the workplace of some schools the demographic makeup of leaders to teachers is disproportionate to the demographics of the school. For instance, recent research shows women make-

up 69% of America's teaching force, yet men still hold 85% of the key leadership positions in districts across the nation (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012). African American and Hispanic educators together comprise 17% of teachers across the nation, yet whites comprise over 90% of superintendents across the U.S. (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012). Although these numbers seem disproportionate, female and minority administrators have increased to some degree over the past two decades. From 1993 to 2004, the percentage of females grew from 34% to 39% (Pirouznia, 2009). From 2004 to 2012 the percentage of female principals jumped from 39% to 59%. This increase shows significant growth. However, a closer look at the statistics reveals the largest gains were represented in female elementary school principals, not secondary principals. Consequently, from 1993 to 2010, the percentage of female secondary principals showed only a slight gain from 16% to 26% (Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Dean, 2013). This information is significant when coupled with the fact secondary principalship is considered a prerequisite to the superintendency (Pirouznia, 2009; Sanchez and Thornton, 2010). Therefore, this anomaly in growth might explain why female superintendents comprise only 15% of district superintendents. Blount (1998) reported that in 1909, Ella Flagg Young the first female superintendent appointed to the office, professed:

Women are destined to rule the schools of every city. I look for a large majority of the big cities to follow the lead of Chicago in choosing a woman for superintendent. In the near future we will have more women than men in executive charge of the vast educational system. (p. 1)

At the time of Young's proclamation, women made up 70% of the educational workforce and 9 percent of all superintendents (Blount, 1998). By 1990, the percent of female superintendents fell to 3 percent. Scholars surmise the decline was due to the end of World War II, a shift in gender sex roles, and the alteration of the bureaucratic structuring of schools and school administrative powers. Blount (1998) reflected on the progression of women and school administration.

The notion that women are making considerable progress after the modern women's movement is ahistorical and demonstrably false in the light of the data in this study. While the percentage of women superintendents has increased since 1970, the increases have been relatively small when compared with data earlier in the century. Also, the kinds of superintendencies offered to women need to be examined. For example, some of these recent increases have occurred in states like California where school districts have been split into secondary and elementary districts. Women are more likely to lead elementary than secondary districts, which, in effect, creates another gender-stratified administrative category. (p. 200)

Today, progress has been made regarding women and the superintendency, but gains are still necessary to align with Young's hopes for the future. As previously noted, women comprise 69% of educators, 26% of secondary administrators, and 15% of all superintendents. Moreover, African Americans comprise 6 percent of superintendents while Hispanics reflect less than 2 percent (Brown, 2011; Bureau of Labor and Statistics, 2012; Pirouznia, 2009). Consequently, the greatest need for growth is in the upper levels of school administration.

Reasons for Variation in Advancement Experiences among Individuals

Several possible explanations exist for the difference in career advancement experiences among individuals. These explanations include: (a) discrimination and bias; (b) societal perceptions; (c) culture; (d) lack of mentors and role models; (e) lack of confidence and aspirations; and (f) lack of informal and formal network supports.

Discrimination and Bias

In the past three decades advances in gender, racial, and ethnic equality in the workplace due to legislation, awareness, and programs have increased the number of women and minorities in

management and upper management positions across America. Although progress has been steady in many work arenas, school administration still needs to continue to increase women and minorities in key leadership positions.

Gender and minorities. Much research has been conducted to decode the reason some women advance into top leadership positions and some do not. Facebook's COO, Sheryl Sandberg (2013) noted:

Women became 50 percent of the college graduates in the 1980s. Since then women have slowly and steadily advanced, earning more and more of the college degrees, taking more of the entry-level jobs, and entering more fields previously dominated by men. Despite these gains, the percentage of women at the top of corporate America has barely budged over the past decade...While women continue to outpace men in educational achievement, we have ceased making real progress at the top of any industry. (p. 5)

Women and leadership have been a source of unwavering debate and controversy. Traditional research on this subject was rooted in the occurrence of gender anomalies in leadership and the awareness of gender disparities in leadership positions. Initial studies focused on the personal traits, characteristics, and abilities women lacked with regard to leadership to explain the gender anomalies (Astin & Leland, 1991). Several studies also addressed women's lack of self-efficacy, aspirations, and motivations to lead to explain the gender discrepancy (Astin & Leland; Blount, 1998; Dean, 2010).

Theoretical underpinnings. After the release of Thomas Kuhn's, *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*, which challenged the idea of scientific theory as the only way to frame research, studies began to emerge reflecting the shift in paradigmatic thinking (Astin & Leland, 1991). Studies framed in the feminist perspective and critical theory emerged to explain gender anomalies. Critical theorists investigated the internal thoughts of powerlessness, shaped by societal influence, women experienced.

Many of these studies commissioned women to overcome these internal barriers and change their own self-perceptions (Pirouznia, 2006). Additionally, research grounded in the feminist perspective, examined sex roles and how they relate to leadership in terms of personal attributes and characteristics (Astin & Leland, 1991).

In the mid to late 1990s, research theoretically underpinned in the feminist perspective, confronted topics such as gender stereotypes, limited opportunity, limited access, and organizational barriers institutions perpetuated to explain the underrepresentation of women in leadership (Weyer, 2007). As the use of theory expanded, so did research targeting leadership positions within organizations and their relationship to gender inequities. One of these targeted areas was school administrators.

Barriers to advancement. Scholarship regarding women in school administration followed a journey similar to that of the early studies of women and leadership. Initial studies described a broad range of topics from what women lack to the obstacles they face in attaining educational leadership positions (Pirouznia, 2006). Barriers found obstructing career mobility of women were gender discrimination, lack of role models, lack of mentors, lack of networking, biased organizational structures, family obligations, the cultural environment, and societal perceptions (Cabrera & Thomas-Hunt, 2007; Grant, 2008; Hamilton, 2009; Hancock, 2012; Kim & Brunner, 2009; Pirouznia, 2009; Kruger, 2008; Lui & Wilson; 2001; Linehan, 2001; Simmons, 2009).

Hancock (2012) conducted a study exploring the career development of female associate and assistant athletic directors at NCAA Division I schools. The research identified several barriers to career advancement including biased organizational structures within the industry. A similar study was conducted by Grant (2008) examining the underrepresentation of ethnic minorities among college athletic directors. Research findings revealed biased organizational culture within college athletics perpetuated limited career advancement opportunities for minorities. Several studies have documented

obstacles women and minorities face obtaining upper-level management positions. A significant amount of research has been carried out on discrimination and bias in the workplace experienced by both women and minorities (Astin & Leland, 1991; Hamilton, 2009; Grant, 2008). Many of the studies include recommendations for organizations on how to increase and support the career advancement of these particular groups within an organization. Recommendations endorse developing and supporting a cultural environment that embraces diversity.

Factors contributing to advancement. Other recent studies have investigated factors that contribute to the career advancement of female and minority administrators. Many of these findings were also mirrored in general studies regarding career advancement and school administrators with no gender or minority influence. Results of these studies identified role models, mentorships, and social networks as factors contributing to career advancement in educational leadership (Anderson, 2011; Cabrera & Thomas-Hunt, 2007; Dean, 2010; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Granovetter, 1973; Kirchmeyer, 2005).

Mentoring. Cabrera and Thomas-Hunt (2007) found a positive relationship exists between mentoring and career mobility of public school administrators. A more significant relationship was found among mentoring and female administrators. Although minorities were included in the relationship, no relationship was found to exist among mentoring and the career mobility of minority administrators. Based upon these findings, Cabrera and Thomas-Hunt (2007) purported educational institutions need to implement administrative mentoring initiatives and recruiting programs. A link between career advancement and mentoring was also found by Anderson (2011) when he conducted a study addressing factors that contribute to the career advancement of female executives. A combination of internal and external factors including self-efficacy, emotional intelligence, and mentoring contributed to career mobility.

A study investigating factors contributing to ethnic minority employee turnover in high tech industries found a strong relationship exists between employee turnover and lack of support programs, lack of diversity in the workplace, and lack of career advancement opportunities (Ezeokeke, 2010). Ezeokeke (2010) connected his findings to the importance of organizational culture.

Social networks. Scholarship identified role models, mentorships, and social networks as factors contributing to career advancement (Dean, 2010; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Kirchmeyer, 2005). Granovetter (1973) found informal network relationships had a significant effect on job mobility and career opportunities within an organization. Confirming these findings, several researchers found informal network structures were positively linked to career advancement and leadership opportunities within an organization (Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Ibarra, 1992; Linehan, 2001).

Career pathways. Kim and Brunner (2009) found vertical maneuvering was established as a more effective pattern of movement when seeking the superintendency. Men and women in school administration were found to follow different career pathways as a conduit to the superintendency. Men were found to move up vertically in an organization, while women were found to have a more radial/horizontal pattern of movement.

Barriers to advancement for African American women. According to Simmons (2009) African American women hold less than one percent of upper-level senior management positions in the American workforce. Her qualitative research explored factors that promoted or obstructed the career advancement of African American women. Findings showed leadership styles, the glass ceiling, corporate culture, networking and mentoring, relationships, and recommendations were factors found to have an impact on advancement.

Perceived advancement challenges for African American administrators. Career advancement experiences of African American administrators at predominately white universities were studied by

Hamilton (2009). Participants perceived challenges surrounding career pathways, cultural identity, organizational culture, and upward mobility opportunities from mid to upper level management positions. Recommendations for educational institutions include creating and sustaining a supportive work environment and developing a cultural organization which promotes and supports diversity.

Culture is a theme woven throughout the research on career advancement. Vital to all aspects of organizational life is the interrelationship of context and culture (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Harris, 2005, 2015; Schein, 2001). Because of context and culture, conditions for advancement are established (Ingersoll & May, 2011; Harris, 2005, 2015). Therefore, a plausible reason for the difference in career advancement among educators is the culture of the school environment (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Grant, 2008; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Morgan 2006; Schein, 2001). The following segment will review cultural perspectives that could explain career advancement in an organization.

Cultural Perspectives

Many perspectives exist that might explain why and how career advancement occurs in an organization. Many paradigms could be considered when breaching the question of why some individuals advance in an organization and some do not.

Power and Politics Cultural Lens

Several attempts have been made by researchers over the past decades to conceptualize organizational politics and its link to power and influence. One description offered by Harold Lasswell seems to capture the essence of the relationship in its most simplistic form and represents politics as “the study of who gets what, when, and how” (as cited in Pfeffer, 1981, p. 304). Building on this concept Morgan (2006) asserted, power is the force that determines who gets what, when, and how. Thus, it could be inferred that in organizations power and politics maintain a reciprocal relationship. Using this

description to characterize politics, one can see how power and politics would play a starring role in the function of advancement within an organization.

Many sources of power exist that determines who gets what, when, and how. For example, formal authority within an organization might determine who holds the power to shape political action in the group through strategic hierarchical structures. Conversely, gender related values within an organization might ordain the power structures. Both of these elements found in the political features of an organization are examples of power sources an individual, sub-group, or the institution as a whole can wield to enhance positions of power (Morgan, 2006). Key power sources in an organization include control of knowledge and information, control of symbolism, the management of meaning, control of boundaries, and the control of scarce resources.

Organizational resources encompass several fundamental necessities that have the ability to tip the scales of power in the political trifecta- who gets what, when, and how. Fundamental necessities that can fuel an organization are “money, materials, technology, personnel, and support from customers, suppliers, and the community at large” (Morgan, 2006, p.169). When these fundamental resources are not distributed evenly within an organization, power can be shifted to favor who is in control of one or more of these limited resources.

According to this cultural perspective, career advancement underpinned by power and politics can manifest itself through the control of resources, knowledge, and influence in an organization. For example, in school environments, advancement for educators could depend on the influence of a school administrator developing conditions for advancement such as professional development opportunities, knowledge of school operations, and leadership roles within the school. Harris (2015) acknowledged the importance of power and authority structures in a school setting.

All schools have authority structures that define who reports to whom, who makes decisions, and what decisions individuals or groups are authorized to make...people who hold authority, power, and control are important because they ultimately determine what happens in schools. (pp. 22-23)

Accordingly, in school environments, questions regarding who gets what, when, and how could play a significant role in the career advancement of educators.

Symbolic Culture Lens

Another cultural perspective that could explain career advancement in an organization is provided by Schein (2001) and involves root metaphors, cultural symbols, and subcultures. Schein described organizational culture as “a pattern of shared basic assumptions that the group learned as it solved its problems of external adaptation and internal integration that has worked well enough to be considered valid and, therefore, to be taught to new members as the correct way to perceive, think, and feel in relation to those problems” (2001, p. 373). This portrayal of organizational culture is a layered, complex set of standards. One of the basic assumptions Schein identified as an indicator of organizational culture is shared “root metaphors” or integrated symbols among a group. This level of common culture is conveyed through symbolic representations of physical features within the culture. These symbolic representations elicit “emotional and aesthetic responses” from group members (2001, p. 373).

Often subcultures emerge as a result of different experiences shared by different group members within one organization (Schein, 2001). These shared experiences can cause group members with common understandings to segregate themselves and develop a subculture within the larger cultural context. These subcultures project images and symbols that distinguish their subculture from the larger cultural organization. An example of this could be a collectivist school environment existing within a

bureaucratic or corporate district. The majority of subcultures develop through external adaptation and internal integration of group members. In school settings, subcultures could form as individual schools within the larger district or subcultures within individual schools. Schein cogitated that culture can form through the process of confronting changes and then integrating those processes into the cultural environment. The internal integration of processing methods then becomes a pattern of behavior and reasoning all members from the culture share. This pattern of action and thinking conveys an image or metaphor understood and embraced by the group, or placed on the group by external members of the cultural organization. As a result, cultural organizations will develop “root metaphors” or symbolic representations that embody the culture of the group or organization. Confirming this logic, Deal and Kennedy (1982) asserted symbols represent fundamental elements of school culture that collectively constitute, “the way things are done around here” (Harris, 2015, p. 34). Symbols orchestrating school culture include: (a) history and stories; (b) heroes and heroines; (c) myths and metaphors; (d) rituals and ceremonies; (e) facility décor; and (f) special language or jargon (Harris, 2015, p. 34)

Each of these symbols actively coordinates and maintains culture within the school. Consequently, interaction of these elements can create conditions that promote or obstruct the advancement of educators. Harris (2015) asserted this idea:

Educators may also find themselves in strong cultures that actually construct obstacles to improvement and effectiveness. “The way things are done around here” may be counterproductive... (p. 35)

Implications of the symbolic cultural perspective regarding the advancement of educators can be seen through the symbolic patterns inherent in the environment. An example of symbolic patterns that could influence career advancement is the metaphor, teacher-as-leader which has become popular in recent years. Moreover, for this metaphor to be embraced in a school setting, certain symbolic patterns must be

in place and valued such as decentralization of power and authority structures, shared decision-making, and flexible role designations. Reflecting on this metaphor, Harris (2015) noted teacher-as-leader has “ramifications for the principal’s role...some school environments are much more conducive than others for implementing such role changes” (p. 11). This logic exemplifies how symbolic patterns could influence career advancement.

According to Schein, (2001) “...leadership and culture are conceptually intertwined” (p. 370). Therefore, leadership and culture cannot be considered in isolation when explaining context. Schein (2001) offered insight to this relationship:

In fact, one could argue that the only thing of real importance that leaders do is to create and manage culture and that the unique talent of leaders is their ability to understand and work with culture. If one wishes to distinguish leadership from management or administration, one can argue that leaders create and change cultures, while managers and administrators live within them. (p. 370)

Advancement within an organization, as Schein (2001) noted, could be a function of individuals understanding and adapting their talents and efforts reflective of their unique culture. He developed this idea with regard to culture and leadership:

Once cultures exist, they determine the criteria for leadership and thus determine who will or will not be a leader...The bottom line for leaders is that if they do not become conscious of the cultures in which they are embedded, those cultures will manage them. Cultural understanding is desirable for all of us, but it is essential to leaders if they are to lead. (p. 374)

Harris acknowledged this notion, “...educators are charged with the ongoing challenge to understand their unique school cultures in order to maximize teaching and learning processes” (2015, p. 36). These

perspectives underscore the importance of culture in understanding, explaining, and describing context (Grant, 2008; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Morgan 2006; Schein, 2001).

Grid and Group Cultural Lens

If power and politics culturally represents “who gets what, when, and how,” and symbolic culture characterizes “the way things are done around here,” then grid and group can be plausibly used to consider the interaction of these dynamics in terms of rules, roles, and relationships in specific cultural contexts (Harris, 2005, 2015; Morgan, 2006; Schein, 2001). Harris (2015) highlighted this interaction regarding school culture:

School culture exerts a powerful force on its members and all school activities. To comprehend a school’s interconnected roles, rules, and relationships requires a framework that considers and explains the pressures and dynamics of culture. (p. 37)

In Mary Douglas’s (1982) Grid and Group Typology, grid represents the rules of the environment while roles are defined through the group dimension. Douglas (1982) described four social contexts: bureaucratic, corporate, individualist, and collectivist. In this perspective, context and culture are interdependent; therefore, cultural elements embedded in each grid and group makeup create certain conditions that may either foster or prevent advancement for individuals within the environment (Anfara & Mertz, 2006; Douglas, 1970, 1996; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Spickard, 1989). Therefore, Douglas’s (1982) typology demonstrates the most likely explanation for the variation in career advancement experiences among educators. Grid and Group has been used to explain culture in a variety of settings (Coc, 2013; Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Kautz, 2008; Limwudhikraijirath, 2009; Murer, 2002; Purvis, 1998; Smith, 2009; Spitzer, 2009; Waelateh, 2009; White, 2013).

Harris (2015) noted the benefits of this theoretical framework for understanding, describing, and explaining school culture:

Douglas's typology of grid and group provides a matrix to classify school contexts and draw specific observations about individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviors. It is designed to take into account the total social environment as well as interrelationships among school members and their context. (p. 37)

For these reasons, Douglas's (1982) Cultural Typology will be used to explore career advancement in the context of culture.

Grid and Group Theoretical Framework

Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Theory is a relatively new paradigm in the pocket of organizational theory; however, it has been fundamental in the field of social anthropology- as it relates to social systems in an environment. With the development and introduction of the grid and group typology, capable of predicting and describing group behavior through the analysis of social control and individual experience, this typology gained momentum with organizational theorists in understanding how social systems or cosmologies form in the presence of grid and group social restraints (Spickard, 1989). The fundamental supposition of the grid and group theory purports there is a predictable interrelationship between social groups and the values that sustain their social systems.

As aforementioned, the conceptual framework that supports the grid and group theory surmises social order can be predicted and classified based on two dimensions of social constraints described as grid and group controls. This idea has the underpinnings of the dichotomous relationship between grid and group dimensions, and how these dimensions can shape and feed the culture within the social system it forms. Four key cosmologies comprise the grid and group typology- bureaucratic, corporate, individualist, and collectivist (Douglas, 1970, 1996). To move forward with Douglas's framework and

its usefulness in explaining and describing the cultural context of the school environment, it is necessary to reflect on the development and transition of the theory over the last four decades.

Development of grid and group theory. Mary Douglas, a British social anthropologist, completed some of her most significant research beyond the scope of anthropology. In 1970, Douglas published *Natural Symbols I* to explain how social systems form as a result of a collective mind-set perpetuated and displayed through symbolic representations. This published work built on concepts from her first text *Purity and Danger*, an in-depth inquiry into diverse purification rituals and how they apply across societal contexts regardless of the type and nature of the society. Douglas (1996) revealed her primary purpose:

I set out to show that the famously primitive concepts of pollution and taboo were with “Us” as much as with “Them.” Ritual defilement should be brought under the same rubric as the rituals of spring cleaning and other domiciliary standards of hygiene. I postulated a universal cognitive block against matter out of place. (p. 1)

This transference of ritual concepts across social contexts set the stage for further study in classifying and providing order to social environments. Initially, Douglas’s work in the vein of symbolic representation to classify cosmologies was foundational in her next publication *Natural Symbols I*. One of the basic assumptions Douglas identifies is social systems can be predicted and classified according to the integrated symbols shared by a group. This level of collective culture is conveyed as symbols and ideology which embody the social group. Symbols and ideology elicit values and commitment from the social group (Spickard, 1989). According to Douglas, cosmologies emerge as a result of common social experiences shared by group members within one social system. These common social experiences can cause group members with collective understandings to develop their own culture. These cultures project images and symbols that distinguish their social culture from other social cultures. Therefore,

the development of cosmologies is a result of shared experiences common among group members that transforms into predictable patterns of behavior and reasoning all members from the culture share.

In Douglas's initial prototype, this pattern of action and thinking conveys a symbolic representation understood and embraced by the group. The fundamental premise derived from her early work in classifying behavior was significant, although challengers of the infant theoretical perspective criticized the black and white view the theory held. Specifically, the universal commendation used to describe all members of society. Drawing on this criticism, Douglas developed her classification protocol to exist on a continuum that acknowledged and embraced extremes within the system. She referred to these extremes within weak and strong dimensions (Spickard, 1989). Recognizing the need to accommodate weak and strong delineations within the classification system, Douglas redistributed her mental model of social organizations and created a typology representative of the interrelationship between social groups and the ideology that sustains their social standing. Douglas (1970) described this transformative process:

With this object I produced a crude typology intended to account for the distribution of values within a population. The account would show the connection between kinds of social organization and the values that uphold them. (p. 2)

As a result of this connective analysis, a simple version of the grid and group typology was generated.

Grid and group initial design. The initial grid and group prototype categorized group associations according to individual experience. Viewing society through the grid and group cultural lens, Douglas described the group dimension as the degree of control exerted on the individual by the group or society in which they belong. Accordingly, simply belonging to a group or society restricts and shapes the conduct of individual members belonging to that group. Using this logic, Douglas posited group dynamics exist in varying levels based on the power of influence the group maintains on the

individual. Group is diagnosed on a horizontal sliding scale according to the degree of rigidity or conformity the individual member agrees to accept. This degree of pressure or control wielded by the group on the individual members comprises the grid dimension of the Douglas model (Douglas, 1970). In the first version, the paramount emphasis behind the grid dimension describes the relationship between the individual and their obligation to the group. Further, grid exposes the social control that group membership requires from the individual within that group. The grid, Douglas asserted, is a measure of the degree “a man is constrained not by group loyalties but by a set of rules which engage him in reciprocal transactions” (Spickard, 1989, p. 157).

Three Models of the Grid and Group Typology

In the first model of the grid and group typology, the grid dimension is represented by the degree of obligation the individual feels toward the group. The degree of obligation the individual accepts prescribes the group association. The boundary represents tight and loose associations dependent upon the degree of control individuals are willing to accept to belong to the group. The point of origin anchoring the theory in the first model is the “individual experience of social control” (Spickard, 1989, p. 159). Cosmologies make up the quadrants of the first model.

In the second model, the grid dimension is represented by the degree of order or “coherence” the social system perpetuates. The degree of order represented in the social system dictates the group dimension or the social pressure imposed or felt by the individual. In this model, domination or social control can be achieved by the group or the individual. The point of origin anchoring the second model shifted from cosmologies to social environments. Although cosmology is still a central theme in the second version, Douglas began to describe “the role of cosmology in preserving social order” (Spickard, 1989, p.162). In her second version of the grid and group theory she developed the premise that cosmology could be predicted from the control systems within a society (Spickard, 1989).

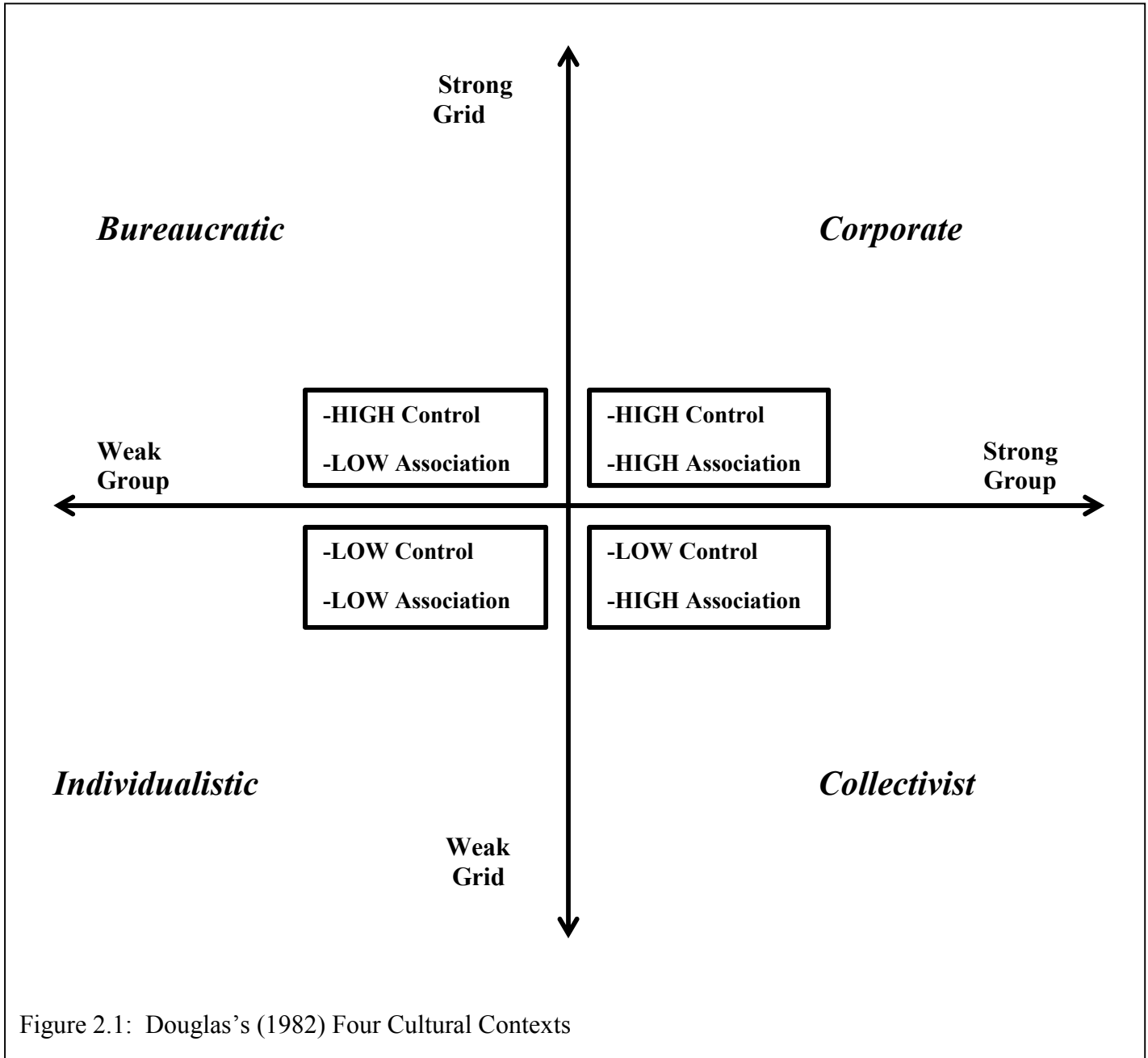
In the third and final model, the grid dimension is represented by the regulations or controls imposed on the individual according to the degree of group affiliation. The degree of group affiliation outlines the group boundary. The boundary represents high and low group commitment based upon the degree of control individuals are willing to accept to belong to the group. In the third model, the point of origin has shifted from social environments to social contexts. Articulating the vision of the final model, Douglas (1982) described the two modes of grid and group, “Two dimensions of control over the individual: group commitment, grid control, every remaining form of regulation; combined, these two dimensions give four extreme visions of social life” (p. 3).

Grid and Group Informing School Culture

Applying grid and group to school culture was the pragmatism behind the need to culturally compare school contexts. Harris affirmed his decision to apply the framework, “The theory helps bring order to experience and provides a common language to explain behaviors and interactions in a school setting” (Harris, 2006, p. 131). Moreover, Douglas’s framework provides a type of rank and order to the description of the cultural context of a school environment. Harris (2006) described his desire to remedy the shortcomings of previous cultural views and lexicons used to describe the cultural context of school environments, “I desired to explore the framework’s utility in educational settings and determine whether grid and group theory was a viable means of explaining nuances of school culture” (Harris, p. 130). Douglas described four quadrants of social contexts- bureaucratic, corporate, individualist, and collectivist. Figure 2.1 represents Douglas’s four cultural contexts.

Figure 2.1

Four Cultural Contexts



According to Harris (2015) the typology proved to be an effective operative lens to view school culture.

He outlined the usefulness of the model to: (a) provide a matrix to classify school contexts; (b) draw

specific observations about individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviors; (c) take into account the total social environment as well as interrelationships among school members and their context; and (d) explain how constructed contextual meanings are generated and transformed (Harris, 2006, p. 131).

Social Game as Levers

The term "social game" was coined by Lingenfelter (1996) to describe the dominant grid and group patterns and behaviors embedded within each school culture. Moreover, social games within an environment can be characterized as the prevalent ideology that cultivates over time within a cultural context. Scheerens (1996), applied *mechanisms*, *modes*, and *levers* to describe how to influence culture in an organization. To further illustrate this concept, social games, or cultural preferences (Harris (2015) will be described as *levers*, or the operational implications within the grid and group *mechanism* of the four cultural *modes* outlined by Douglas (Hopkins, 2005, p. 73). An example of the bureaucratic context will be offered to illustrate this relationship. The bureaucratic functioning or *mode* of the bureaucratic cultural context is the principles defining the environment such as division of labor, chain of command, and hierarchy. Grid and group *mechanisms* within the environment represent control and affiliation. The *lever* or social game in this environment is authoritarianism. The *lever* represents the grid and group continuum of strength (Hopkins, 2005).

Continuum of Strength

The grid feature of Douglas's typology is the degree in which individuals within a group are constrained by structural and/or functional mechanisms embedded within the cultural environment. The grid mechanism exists on a continuum of strength designated from weak to strong. Weak-grid environments support individual autonomy, loosely defined rules and roles, and shared power and authority among members. Inversely, strong-grid environments confine individual autonomy, clearly define rules and roles, and shared power and authority among few members (Harris, 2015).

The group feature of Douglas's typology is the degree in which individuals appreciate and rely on group associations and are committed to the group as a whole. The group mechanism exists on a continuum of strength designated from weak to strong. Weak-group environments support low-group commitment, few social interactions, weak affinity toward group and group goals, and self-preservation. Conversely, strong-group environments support high-group commitment, many social interactions, strong affinity toward group and group goals, and group-preservation (Harris, 2015).

Grid and Group Designations of the Four Cultural Modes

Individualist Cultural Mode

- Weak-Grid Mechanism
- Strong-Group Mechanism
- "Individualism" as social game lever

Bureaucratic Cultural Mode

- Strong-Grid Mechanism
- Weak-Group Mechanism
- "Authoritarianism" as social game lever

Corporate Cultural Mode

- Strong-Grid Mechanism
- Strong-Group Mechanism
- "Hierarchy" as social game lever

Collectivist Cultural Mode

- Weak-Grid Mechanism
- Strong-Group Mechanism
- "Egalitarianism" as social lever

Individualist Cultural Mode

The Individualist cultural mode is located in the bottom left quadrant of the model. This environment can be characterized in the weak-grid, weak-group distinction. According to Douglas, “The main form of control that is available here is by competition” (1970, 1996, p. 6). Harris (2006) related this description to the school context:

The emphasis on social distinction among individuals is submerged, there are few insider-outsider screens, and little value is placed on long-term corporate survival. The predominant social game in this environment is “individualism,” which encourages members to make the most of individual opportunities, to seek risks that result in personal gains, and to be competitive and proactive in carving their future in life. (p. 135)

Individualist mode and career advancement. The individualist cultural mode can be characterized as a weak-grid, weak-group environment. The social game lever embedded within the environment is individualism which supports autonomy, competition, and self-preservation. The individualist environment contains the ability to promote and obstruct career advancement. Due to the competitive nature of this context, opportunity for internal advancement exists for those individuals showing productivity and competence in their role as a teacher. Although this avenue for career advancement exists, utilizing the social game lever of individualism characterized as autonomy, competition, and self-preservation may prove a hindrance once promotion has been achieved. Moreover, the levers utilized to achieve career advancement in the individualist context are not necessarily the same qualities members of individualist contexts prefer. This may have an impact on career advancement since power and authority is granted to administrators by teachers in an individualist environment. As previously mentioned, career advancement in an individualistic environment is based on autonomy, competition, and self-preservation. Teachers showing high productivity could wield as

much power as administrators. The competitive nature of this environment allows rank to be placed on individuals showing high productivity; therefore educators could advance in this environment.

Conversely, opportunity for advancement would be limited for teachers or administrators perceived as weak or unproductive.

Bureaucratic Cultural Mode

The next context characterized in the grid and group model is the bureaucratic environment. Located in the top left quadrant of the typology, the bureaucratic environment represents a high-grid, low-group context. Douglas (1970) noted, “The extreme left-hand top has strong grid controls, without any group membership to sustain individuals” (p. 6). This type of environment is rigid and hierarchical based on individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background. According to Scott and Davis (2006), Max Weber’s model of bureaucracy consists of five central principles one would expect to find in a bureaucratic organization including: (a) fixed division of labor; (b) hierarchy of offices; (c) general rules that govern performance; (d) separation of personal and official property and rights; (e) personnel selected based on technical qualifications; and (f) employment of members seen as life-long (p. 48).

When applied to school culture, Harris (2006) provided a detailed description of the bureaucratic school environment.

The social game in this environment is “authoritarianism.” Authoritarianism promotes limited opportunity for advancement, compliance with rules and procedures, lack of control of school goals and rewards by teachers, and autocratic rule by administrators. (p.136)

Bureaucratic mode and career advancement. The bureaucratic cultural mode can be characterized as a strong-grid, weak-group environment. The social game lever embedded within the environment is authoritarianism which supports hierarchical power structures, clearly defined rules and roles, and an autocratic style of leadership. The bureaucratic school environment has the capacity to

both promote and obstruct career advancement. Harris (2015) depicted teacher implications in the bureaucratic context:

Teachers cultivate expertise in specific grade levels or departments. However, they understand that unless they make noticeable impact on the working environment, they may be replaced by other teachers with comparable or superior competence. (p. 113)

This same logic can be applied to administrators in the bureaucratic context. Due to the authoritarianism social game embedded within the culture, positional power is displayed on a distinct chain of authoritarian command. With this power resides responsibility and ownership of their school site. The bureaucratic mode tends to support horizontal movement of administrator to administrator across schools rather than vertical movement of teachers to administrators within schools due to the authoritarian nature of the context. Thus, this type of environment has the ability to impede or support career advancement. In the bureaucratic environment, power is based on hierarchical distribution of roles and responsibilities. This distinct chain of command creates limited opportunity for career advancement within the school environment. Principals perceived as incompetent would most likely be replaced through horizontal movement from school to school, rather than vertical movement from within schools.

Corporate Cultural Mode

Douglas (1970, 1996) described the corporate environment, located in the top right quadrant as “...strong on grid, strong on group, will be a society in which all roles are ascribed, all behavior governed by positional rules, all the constituent group contained within a comprehensive larger group” (p. 4). Harris (2015) built on this description and noted the corporate context is a bounded entity with individual members existing according to their allegiance and commitment to the group. Control of the individual member is exerted through the advancement of the group. Hierarchy and position hold power

in the corporate environment. Harris (2006) contended, “The social game valued in this environment is ‘hierarchy,’ because the members understand that in a hierarchical system what is good for the corporation is good for the individual” (p. 136).

Corporate mode and career advancement. The corporate cultural mode can be described as a strong-grid, strong-group environment. This mode mirrors many features of the bureaucratic context with one clear distinction that exists within the group mechanism of Douglas’s typology. In the corporate mode, group preservation is facilitated by member’s strong allegiance to the group, while the bureaucratic mode reflects a weak-group distinction characterized by low-group commitment and loose group associations. The social game embedded in the corporate context is hierarchy which protects and fosters group success through the idea that what benefits the group also benefits the individual. In the corporate mode, the social game lever of hierarchy can both hinder and promote career advancement. Due to the nature of the corporate context, to insulate itself against outsiders, internal career advancement opportunities may exist for those willing to “climb the ladder” (Harris, 2015). However, the strong-grid, strong-group designation of the corporate mode can alternatively foster little administrative turnover and therefore positions in the upper echelons of the hierarchy are scarce. Power is based on hierarchical distribution of roles and responsibilities. Unlike the bureaucratic environment, this distinct chain of command creates increased opportunity for career advancement due to strong-group affiliation; however, movement in the context is rare as a result of the deep connection felt by individual group members.

Collectivist Cultural Mode

The bottom right quadrant of Douglas’s typology makes up the collectivist context characterized by the weak-grid, strong-group culture of the environment. Douglas explained this environment in terms of power and authority, “Preferring equality, such a group would be handicapped by problems of

leadership, authority and decision-making” (1970, p. 6). Harris (2006) connected this explanation to the school environment.

“Egalitarianism” is valued as this environment’s social game. Egalitarianism places a high value on unity, equal distribution of teaching supplies and space, suspicious of those outside the school community who may want to help, conformity to the norms of the group, as well as rejection of authoritarian leadership and hierarchy. (p. 136)

Additionally, roles in a collectivist environment are earned; however, few power distinctions exist within the roles.

Collectivist mode and career advancement. The collectivist cultural mode can be characterized as a weak-grid, strong-group environment. The social game lever embedded within this context is egalitarianism. Egalitarianism promotes unity, distributive leadership, collaboration, competition, and group-preservation. The collectivist environment contains the ability to promote and obstruct career advancement. Due to the competitive nature of this context and the mistrust of outsiders, opportunity for internal advancement exists for those individuals showing capacity to lead and accomplish group goals. On the other hand, career advancement can be obstructed for administrators or teacher-leaders coming from outside of the collectivist environment. This type of environment fosters the opportunity for career advancement for individuals showing competency in their roles and responsibilities. Horizontal movement from school to school is less likely than vertical movement within the environment. Moreover, cultural elements embedded in each grid and group make-up create certain conditions that may either foster or prevent advancement for individuals within the environment (Anfara & Mertz, 2006; Douglas, 1970, 1996; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Spickard, 1989).

Grid and Group Research Informing School Culture

One primary matter must be resolved before grid and group can be applied to school culture. This matter concerns whether or not grid and group provides a useable framework to explain and describe school culture. The answer to this question is critical to validate the use of grid and group theory to understand and explain what is present in the cultural context of the school environment that promotes and inhibits the career advancement of educators.

According to Harris, (2015) the limited lexicon used to describe organizational culture and the singular view of culture tantamount in earlier studies, made cultural comparisons across school contexts problematic. Therefore, developing school culture as a valid research paradigm in educational literature was a challenge due to the singular view of culture typically described in the abstract terms the majority of studies represented (Anfara & Mertz, 2006). Previous research informing grid and group theory was conducted in political, religious, and ethnic contexts, as well as workplace environments (Anfara & Mertz, 2006).

Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Typology has been used to explain culture in a variety of settings (Coc, 2013; Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Kautz, 2008; Limwudhikraijirath, 2009; Murer, 2002; Purvis, 1998; Smith, 2009; Spitzer, 2009; Waelateh, 2009; White, 2013). The following section provides an overview of how grid and group has been utilized to describe, compare, and explain: (a) contextual culture of school settings; (b) attributes and preferences of individuals within school settings; (c) comparison of contextual cultural across schools; (d) fidelity in site-based implementation initiatives; and (e) leadership styles and influence of principals and superintendents. Limitations of this framework will also be discussed in the concluding paragraph of this section.

Contextual Culture of School Settings

Although research is limited on Douglas's (1982) cultural typology informing school culture, the existing research confirms the typology is useful in describing, comparing, and explaining school culture

in a variety of educational settings. White (2013) explored the role of school culture in planning processes associated with School Improvement Plans. In this case, the grid and group typology was an effective tool to describe and explain school culture. Ellis (2006) found grid and group to be a viable theory to explore the interrelationship of behaviors and interactions of at-risk students in an alternative school culture. The alternative school in this study was classified as an individualistic environment characterized by low-grid and low-group distinctions. The “at-risk” students in this study were asked to describe their expectations of what an alternative school setting could and should provide in terms of educational needs and objectives with regard to school cultural. Findings from the study revealed the individualist classification was useful in identifying and describing the roles and interactions of students in this cultural environment. In addition, important aspects of this type of environment such as competition and self-preservation were helpful in understanding and describing the successes and failures of the school. Consistent with individualistic characteristics embedded within this environment, success was attributed to individualized instruction, competition, and self-efficacy. Results of this study supported the idea that distinct patterns and behaviors are associated with distinct school culture defined through grid and group quadrants.

Diel (1998) utilized grid and group to explore and describe rural schools. Each school represented a high achieving illustration of a bureaucratic, corporate, collectivist, and individualist school setting. This study perpetuates the notion that contextual culture across schools and quadrants cannot be described in terms of successful and unsuccessful environments, but can be described according to effective approaches to teaching and learning aligned with each environment.

Individual Preference within School Settings

Grid and group has been found useful in understanding and describing individuals and individual preference of approaches to teaching and learning prevalent in each quadrant (Kautz, 2008; Purvis,

1998; Waelateh, 2009). Purvis (1998) conducted research on the educational preference of teachers in terms of gender, race, and school-level orientation viewed through the grid and group typology. Gender and race was found to be insignificant to individual preference. Preferential differences were indicated among secondary and elementary teachers. Of the 12 participants, the majority of teachers preferred individualist environments while none of the participants preferred bureaucratic environments. From these findings, Purvis (1998) concluded educational preference was more likely to follow a pattern based on past experiences rather than on gender, race, or school-level affiliation.

The grid and group typology was used to explain the cultural context and preferences of the English as a Foreign Language Department at a university in Thailand. According to Waelateh, (2009) educators in this department classified their teaching methods as bureaucratic in nature despite indicating a strong preference for collectivist approaches to teaching and learning. Although grid and group was useful in describing preferences of individuals, limitations of the framework were noted relevant to moving from one quadrant to another. Limitations of the framework will be discussed in a subsequent section.

Comparison of Contextual Culture across Schools

The grid and group framework has been found useful in describing and explaining nuances of contextual culture across schools (Coc, 2013; White, 2013). The grid and group framework was used to understand and explain the contextual meaning and exhibition of Emotional Intelligence (EI) within a corporate and collectivist environment. Results of the study showed similar implementation across cultures, this was attributed to the high-group dimensions of both cultures. However, the corporate school culture provided more favorable conditions for the integration and promotion of EI than a collectivist school culture. The noted differences in implementation were attributed to the teamwork, collaboration, partnership, and the community in a corporate environment. Although collectivist

environments value many of the same cultural attributes, Coc (2013) found the primary school in the study tended to work more internally and without explicit protocols for initiatives such as (EI) due to its weak-grid classification.

In a similar study, White (2013) applied grid and group to the process of school improvement planning. Two schools representative of a corporate culture and a collectivist culture were selected for the study. Both cultural environments showed different, yet effective means for creating and implementing the School Improvement Plan (SIP) within their specific cultures. Similar patterns of behavior and processes were found across both schools consistent with strong-group culture. According to White (2013), differences in processes and behaviors across schools could be explained by the weak-grid dimensions associated with the collectivist environment and the strong-grid dimension associated with the corporate environment. In this study, Douglas's typology was found useful in explaining similarities and differences in planning processes based on grid and group distinctions. Although grid and group was determined to be useful in explaining and describing similarities and differences across schools, limitations to the framework were found and will be discussed in the limitations section of this chapter.

Fidelity in Site-Based Implementation Initiatives

Grid and group research has shown the benefits of aligning implementation strategies and initiatives with cultural aspects embedded within each distinct cultural environment (Boettger, 1997; Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Kanaly, 2000; Limwudhikraijirath, 2009; Murer, 2002; Smith, 2009; Spitzer, 2004; White, 2013). Douglas' (1982) typology was used to explain the interrelationship between organizational culture, teacher preferences, and professional development strategies. Regression analysis was used to determine the significance of a match between the culture preference of teachers and the professional development practices at their school on teacher satisfaction with professional

development practices. Results showed a relationship existed between teacher satisfaction with professional development practices and the match with their cultural preferences. According to Smith (2009), findings revealed understanding the school culture and aligning professional development practices accordingly can increase overall teacher satisfaction with professional development.

Similar findings had been reported by Spitzer (2004) regarding the implementation of instructional technology (IT) programs in school settings. Understanding the contextual culture of the school environment was found to increase the fidelity of implementation. In this study, fidelity of implementation in the individualist environment varied greatly as a result of the weak-grid, weak-group aspects of the culture. Individualistic cultural aspects found to influence implementation were teacher autonomy and teacher competition. Alternatively, IT implementation in the corporate environment was consistent and less saturated than in the individualistic environment. Results were attributed to differences in the control administrators had over programs and initiatives in this strong-grid, strong-group environment.

Through grid and group, Murer (2002) explained how organizational cultures promoted or obstructed the mentoring of female faculty members. The results of this study indicated all three environments showed barriers to the implementation of mentoring. Of the three environments, the collectivist culture was found most conducive to mentoring although limited mentoring was implemented due to the low priority this strong-group, weak-grid environment placed on the initiative. The individualist context offered the least amount of opportunities for mentoring which is consistent with the weak-grid, weak-group environment. In this study, grid and group typology was found beneficial in explaining and describing the differences in the fidelity of implementation initiatives according to grid and group dimensions.

Kanally (2002) found the degree of new teacher participation in decision making varied across grid and group associations. Results showed low-grid environments encouraged teacher voice while high-grid environments discouraged new teacher input in decision making; accordingly, decision making varied according to grid and group dimensions.

Similarly, Boettger (1997) found the fidelity in site-based management in public schools could be explained through specific grid and group dimensions within the school culture. Results showed the degree of effective site-based management was influenced by cultural aspects embedded in the school environment.

Leadership Styles and Influence of Principals and Superintendents

Through grid and group typology, Chastain (2005) explained how culture affects the fidelity of school improvement strategies across schools within the same quadrant. This study compared two corporate contexts and found implementation of the six leadership strategies varied according to the leadership styles prevalent in each school. Major differences in the successful implementation of school improvement across corporate environments were principal support of improvement initiatives and teacher buy-in.

Kelly (1999) explored the influence of the leadership styles of superintendents on contextual culture. The caveat in this study was the examination of *founding* superintendents and how their leadership style influenced the formation of culture. In this study, Douglas's (1982) Typology provided an effective lens for describing and explaining culture in terms of alternative school settings such as vocational-technical schools. Results confirmed the founding leadership styles of superintendents played a role in shaping the contextual culture of schools consistent with the typology. The researcher recognized the cultural typology as a dynamic framework designed with the ability to describe and explain culture over a period of time. In addition, the framework enabled the study of the leadership

influence of founding superintendents from the early stages of cultural development to the current stages. Through the grid and group lens, this research illuminated the leadership influence of founding superintendents.

Balenseifen (2004) described characteristics of successful superintendents and used the lens of grid and group theory to describe the cultural context in which success was achieved. In this study, success was defined as superintendents employed in the same district for more than five years. Results of this study showed leadership styles of superintendents play a role in tenure. In addition, Balenseifen found superintendents working within collectivist environments and maintaining a leadership style congruent with collectivism contributed to success. Dimensions of the high-group culture such as group affiliation, common goals, and group preservation were significant factors in superintendent success.

In the same way, Boettger (1997) explained site-based decision making through the grid and group typology, Barnes (1998) explored the usefulness of the framework in explaining site-based decision making related to the leadership styles of principals. Both studies indicated that schools existing across cultural contexts were different; yet they implemented site-based decision-making in a similar way based upon the leadership style of the principal.

Limitations of the Framework

Waelateh (2009) denoted the limitation of the framework in explaining how to transition from one culture to another. In this case, individuals in the study described their approach to teaching and learning as bureaucratic in nature; however each instructor showed a preferential bias toward collectivist strategies of teaching and learning. Although the typology was a sufficient lens to describe and understand culture in the study, the theory stopped short of bridging the current cultural practices of educators to the cultural practices they prefer. Acknowledging this notion, limitations to the theory were also reported by White.

Larger contexts, state and federal requirements, motivation, leadership, and demographics all played a role in determining how the schools implemented the School Improvement Planning Process, regardless of their grid and group cultural profiles. (2013, p. 186)

Summary

Chapter II provided a detailed review of literature to substantiate the necessity for this study. Topics addressed in Chapter II included: Equal Employment Opportunity Act and how it relates to the educational environment, reasons some administrators advance and some do not, factors contributing to career advancement, barriers to career advancement, cultural perspectives explaining organizational culture and career advancement, and the development and implementation of Douglas's (1982) Grid and Group Theoretical Framework. In addition, an overview of each of the four grid and group quadrants and how cultural elements associated with each quadrant can influence career advancement was offered. The chapter concluded with grid and group research informing school culture.

CHAPTER III

METHODOLOGY

It would be possible to describe everything scientifically, but it would make no sense; it would be description without meaning, as if you described a Beethoven symphony as a variation of wave pressure.

-Albert Einstein (Born, 1966)

Einstein's words offer insight into the methods used in this study. The problem of advancement could be investigated through quantitative inquiry. However, as Einstein noted, quantification in isolation makes little sense and has limited meaning if human interaction and context are absent. Contextualizing the problem through qualitative methods creates a more complete picture. For this reason, qualitative methods were used for this study. Qualitative inquiry provides a flexible design strategy that responds and shapes to emerging themes and patterns encountered during the research process (Patton, 2002). Realizing the complexities of culture, I used emergent flexible design to complement this research. Utilizing qualitative methods to explore school culture and the career advancement of educators shed light on culture in particular cases that supported and obstructed advancement.

Research Design

The purpose of this study was to explain, through the lens of grid and group theory, how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators. The epistemological perspective that guided this study was constructionism, which focuses on how humans construct meaning from the world around them (Creswell, 2009). This research focused on the role culture and context played in the career advancement of educators because "...context provides great power for understanding" in educational settings (Erlandson et al., 1993, p.17). Harris (2015) asserted "...culture, is inextricably linked to context" (p. x). Moreover, Schein (1993) acknowledged "...leadership and culture are conceptually intertwined" (p. 370). Therefore, leadership, context, and culture cannot be viewed as isolated variables but as working parts in the holistic portrayal of career advancement.

I employed case study methodology, which provided a vehicle to explore "complex social phenomenon" occurring in "real-life context" (YIN, 2003a, p. 2). Merriam (2009) defined case study inquiry as "...an in-depth description and analysis of a bounded system" (p. 43). In this study, each unit of analysis designated by the grid and group typology signified a bounded system representative of distinct culture present in each environment. Therefore, this design was an effective method to facilitate a holistic understanding of the issue, yet provide data pieces that can be used to explain and describe career advancement through the lens of culture.

The language of Douglas's (1982) typology of grid and group was used to explain the cultural context of schools. This framework allowed me to observe school culture through a cultural lens in relation to social interactions and the structures that governed those interactions. Application of the theory occurred after data were collected and provided a cultural mosaic of associations used to explain and describe the environment.

Methodological Procedures

Data Collection

Data collection occurred through surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis to provide the most comprehensive, holistic portrayal of what was present in the school environment that promoted and obstructed career advancement.

Harris's (2015) Cultural Assessment Tool (see Appendix D) was used to select three to four schools to study. Three school sites were selected as unit(s) of analysis based upon a representative classification of three cultural environments—corporate, collectivist, and bureaucratic. The identification of school sites began with a list of secondary schools from the district tentatively classified into one of the cultural environments based upon public documents and school websites. The principals of these schools were asked to distribute a flier to their faculty containing the link to the Cultural Assessment Tool that identified the type of school environment in which they worked. Scores from each participant were plotted on a grid and were classified into one of the four cultural profiles described by Douglas (1982): corporate, collectivist, individualist, or bureaucratic environment. For scores to be considered valid, a minimum of five teachers from each school site needed to respond to the online assessment tool. This procedure identified the units of analysis based on the four cultural environments. From the generated list of schools, purposeful sampling was used to select three school sites within the district as information-rich sources of data due to each school's unique status as a corporate, collectivist, and bureaucratic environment. After the purposeful selection of school sites, a criterion sample of school administrators from each site willing to participate in the study were selected as interview participants. Criterion sampling procedures identified a sample population based upon specific criteria (Patton, 2002). This sample included parents, educators, deans, assistant principals, executive directors, and principals at each site.

Permission to conduct the study was requested from the district superintendent in February 2015 (see Appendix A). Letters were sent to all participants explaining the study and why they were selected to participate in the study. All interview participants signed an informed consent document before the study commenced (see Appendix B).

The Cultural Assessment Tool is designed to help educators decide which of the four prototypes is most similar to the values, rules, and structure of a particular school setting, group, or other unit of analysis (Harris, 2005, p. 72). Survey questions ranged on a Likert Scale of one to eight. Twelve questions addressed the grid dimension of the school and 12 questions addressed the group dimension of the school. For each respondent an average for each dimension was represented as (Xgrid, Ygroup) value. The (X,Y) value was then applied to Douglas's (1982) cultural typology. As aforementioned, the survey tools were specifically created by Harris to classify and interpret school culture. Concurrent with the creation of the survey instrument to classify and interpret school culture, Harris developed scoring and plotting techniques with the ultimate goal of categorizing the "unit of analysis" in one of the four quadrants of culture bounded by the grid and group typology (Harris, 2015). The assessment instruments created by Harris were adapted to meet the purpose of this research.

Harris's (2005, 2015) Cultural Preference Assessment Tool (see Appendix E) measured the social game most preferred by the respondent as operationalized through the social games embedded within the grid and group typology. For the purposes of this inquiry, the Cultural Preference Assessment Tool was modified to reflect a greater administrator focus. Understanding the preferred social game of administrator respondents aided in understanding what was present in the cultural context of the school environment that promoted and obstructed career advancement. For example, during the data collection phase of the study, patterns may emerge from the Cultural Preference Assessment Tool showing the majority of principals prefer the social game of "individualism" which supports autonomy,

competition, and self-preservation in an environment. Equally, if a concurrent pattern emerges from assistant principal respondents showing a preferential bias toward the social game of “egalitarianism” which supports unity, equality, competition, and group-preservation; a relational inference could be made that respondents preferring “individualism” are more likely to advance to the principalship than those preferring “egalitarianism.” The Cultural Preference Assessment Tool was modified to include closed-ended survey questions. The additional survey questions were specifically tailored to deans, assistant principals, and principal respondents. Participants were asked to respond to all survey items which applied to them.

Data needed for this study included information gathered from a modified version of Harris’s (2015) Cultural Preference Assessment Tool and Cultural Assessment Tool. Harris’s Cultural Preference Assessment Tool (See Appendix E) measured the cultural preference of the respondents as operationalized through Douglas’s (1982) grid and group typology. For the purposes of this study, this tool was modified to reflect a greater administrator focus. Understanding the cultural preference of administrative respondents provided valuable information in understanding what was present in the cultural context of the school environment that promoted and obstructed career advancement. Additional data needed for this study included data gathered from a modified version of Harris’s Cultural Assessment Tool (See Appendix D) that classified the cultural context present in the school environment in which the respondent worked as viewed through Douglas’s grid and group typology. The Cultural Assessment Tool was modified slightly to reflect past tense verb renderings of the original survey instrument. In this study, respondents achieved the position of school administrator and therefore reflected on their career advancement experiences from teacher to assistant principal to principal or a combination of the three. Career advancement experiences might have occurred in multiple settings or in one single environment; therefore, assessment items were past and present tense. To ensure the data

needs of this inquiry were met, assistant principals were asked to reflect on the cultural context of the school environment associated with their teacher to assistant principal career advancement experiences when completing the Tool. Accordingly, principals were asked to reflect on the cultural context of the school environment associated with their assistant principal to principal career advancement experiences when completing the survey. Another modification of the assessment tool was the addition of closed ended survey question that were inserted after the “Example Items” preceding the 24 survey questions. The additional survey questions were specifically tailored to assistant principal respondents and principal respondents. For assistant principal respondents the questions read:

Reflecting on my career advancement experiences from teacher to assistant principal, the school environment in which I worked _____ my career advancement.

- Promoted
- Obstructed

For principal respondents the question will read:

Reflecting on my career advancement experiences from assistant principal to principal, the school environment in which I worked _____ my career advancement.

- Promoted
- Obstructed

Data from the two survey instruments provided valuable information in understanding and describing what was present in the cultural context of the school environment that promoted and obstructed the career advancement of school administrators.

Interviews. Interviews focused on culture and career advancement. The purpose of interviews, Patton (2002) noted, “is to allow us to enter into the other person’s perspective” (p. 341). Purposive sampling was used to select deans, assistant principals, and principals as interview participants to better understand what was present in the school environment that promoted and obstructed career

advancement. Criteria such as school administrators working within each diverse cultural context were implemented. In this study, respondents achieved the position of school administrators and therefore reflected on their career advancement experiences from teacher to dean or assistant principal, assistant principal to principal or a combination of these scenarios. Merriam (2009) discussed interviewing in qualitative inquiry:

Interviewing is necessary when we cannot observe behavior, feelings, or how people interpret the world around them. It is also necessary to interview when we are interested in past events that are impossible to replicate. (p. 88)

Interview questions were semi-structured and focused on culture and career advancement (see Appendix C). Interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded according to emerging themes, patterns, and relationships. Follow-up interviews were conducted as necessary to create the most complete picture of the problem being studied. From each interview, a summary of the information was recorded on 3x5 index cards; cards were grouped according to emerging themes.

My interview protocol included 8 open-ended questions. Some questions contained sub questions. Follow-up questions were asked as needed. Three questions addressed the cultural context of the school the participants worked in and five questions addressed career advancement (see Appendix H).

I conducted eleven interviews with principals, assistant principals, deans, and one executive director at each of the schools in this study. Eleven out of 15 administrators participated in this study. Figure 3.1 shows the three schools in this study and the administrators interviewed at each respective site.

CASE STUDY	PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL	DEAN	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR
CORPORATE Hudson High School	Mr. Doss	Mr. Ellis Ms. White	Ms. Green Ms. Howard Mr. Oak	N/A
BUREAUCRATIC Brown High School	Ms. Anderson	Ms. Richards		N/A
COLLECTIVIST Wilson Academy High School	Ms. Ward	N/A	Mr. Scott	Mr. Ross

Figure 3.1: Shows the three schools and the administrative interview participants at each school. Eleven out of 15 administrators participated in interviews.

Observations. Observational data were collected during school site visits and focused on context and culture. Observations documented participants, behaviors, and interactions that occurred in each of the unit(s) of analysis (Harris, 2015). Field notes were recorded in a semi-structured way utilizing guiding questions such as:

- What is the context?
- What kind of behaviors does the environment promote and obstruct?
- Who are the participants?
- What are their roles?
- What are the governing rules in the setting?
- How do the participants interact?

Observations, Merriam (2009) concluded, "...triangulate emerging findings; that is, they are used in conjunction with interviewing and document analysis to substantiate findings" (p. 119). Observations focused on school culture.

Documents. Data drawn from documents, Merriam (2009) contended, "can furnish descriptive information, verify emerging hypotheses, advance new categories and hypotheses, offer historical understanding, track change and development..." (p. 155). Public documents and school websites were used to gain a deeper understanding of the context and the phenomenon being studied. In addition, an audit trail is available that documented experiences, processes, and decisions I made during the conduct of the study.

Data Analysis

According to Erlandson and his colleagues (1993), "The analysis of qualitative data is best described as a progression, not a stage; an ongoing process, not a one-time event" (p. 111).

Acknowledging the progressive nature of qualitative data analysis, Creswell (2009) outlined six analytical steps "...involving continual reflection about the data, asking analytical questions, and writing memos throughout the study" (p. 184). The hierarchical steps consist of organizing and preparing data, coding data, generating themes and categories, conveying findings, and interpreting meanings (Creswell, 2009). Application of the grid and group theoretical framework occurred after data were collected and provided a filter through which all data were analyzed.

Organize, prepare, and read data. Organizing, preparing, and reading data included transcribing interviews and analyzing survey data. The data analysis process was enhanced by scoring and plotting procedures developed by Harris (2015) to analyze data gathered from the two diagnostic tools utilized in this study.

Code data. All interviews were recorded, transcribed, and coded according to emerging themes, patterns, and relationships. From each interview, a summary of the information were recorded on 3x5 index cards; cards were grouped according to emerging themes and categories. Major themes were noted. Data were filtered through the predetermined grid and group typology quadrants.

Generate themes or categories. Individual groups of 3x5 cards received tentative category classifications. Working hypotheses were noted. Cards were sorted and resorted again and working hypotheses were tested through new data collection. This process was ongoing until no new data emerged from the process.

Use of grid and group terminology. Mary Douglas's (1982) grid and group theory was used to explain the interrelationship between culture and career advancement and provided a cultural lexicon to describe this interrelationship. The use of grid and group terminology offered a type of rank and order to the description of the four cultural environments- individualist, bureaucratic, corporate, and collectivist. Grid and group terminology included the following:

Individualist Cultural Mode

- Weak-Grid Mechanism
- Strong-Group Mechanism
- "Individualism" as social game lever

Bureaucratic Cultural Mode

- Strong-Grid Mechanism
- Weak-Group Mechanism
- "Authoritarianism" as social game lever

Corporate Cultural Mode

- Strong-Grid Mechanism

- Strong-Group Mechanism
- “Hierarchy” as social game lever

Collectivist Cultural Mode

- Weak-Grid Mechanism
- Strong-Group Mechanism
- “Egalitarianism” as social lever

Harris (2006) reflected on the benefits of using grid and group terminology to inform research noting the typology has “...provided convenient labels, categories, and vernacular, which has helped in expressing and comparing cultural phenomena” (p. 141). Grid and group theory was applied after coding and sorting data occurred and offered a “fresh lens” to examine data (Harris, 2005).

Convey findings and interpret meanings. Results of the study were conveyed in a qualitative narrative format supplemented with tables, graphs, charts and detailed descriptions of the findings.

Researcher Role

Researcher Bias

In qualitative research, my role as the researcher was to collect data through active participation in the research process. However, it was imperative that throughout this interaction focus was preserved on the meaning participants constructed from the process, not meaning I may indirectly impose on the research process (Creswell, 2009). My desire to address the fundamental problem identified in this study derives from personal experience. To this study, I bring experience as a secondary assistant principal employed in the district. As a result of my status as a female Caucasian assistant principal employed in this district, I brought certain biases to this study such as gender, race, experience, knowledge of participants, and my own career advancement experiences in this organization. Moreover, my first career advancement experience occurred in a collectivist environment; as an administrator I

preferred this type of environment. I now work in a corporate environment where opportunities for growth seem less available. In addition, I observed discrimination with certain ethnic groups and gender in school settings. These beliefs could affect my interpretation of data or my perceptions of the outcomes of the study; however, this was not my intent (Creswell, 2009). My intent was to maintain my role as a qualitative researcher and focus on participant's perceptions and constructions (Erlandson et.al, 1993). I began this study with the expectation that cultural contexts had the power to influence the career advancement of educators.

Ethical Considerations

The following ethical considerations were implemented to protect participant's rights: (a) Institutional Review Board approval was received before the study began; (b) this study protected the anonymity of respondents; (c) participants in the study responded voluntarily; (d) participants signed an informed consent document before interviews commenced; (e) data collected during the study was kept in a secure location; (f) methods of data collection accurately portrayed the outcomes of the research questions from the perspective of the participants; and (g) interpretation of the data reflected the participant's constructions of reality about the phenomenon (Creswell, 2009).

Trustworthiness of Findings

Credibility

Credibility in qualitative inquiry is the value of truth or internal validity represented in research findings. Moreover, how accurately the researcher interprets and portrays the constructions of the individual or the group about the phenomena being studied (Creswell, 2009) is how credibility is established. This qualitative inquiry established credibility through triangulation of data, purposeful sampling, member checking, and access to an audit trail. Triangulation verified data through the use of multiple methods of data collection. Surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis met the

threshold of data verification. Purposive sampling was implemented through the purposeful selection of school sites and the criterion sample of school administrators at each site. Member checking was utilized to establish credibility during interviews through informal data checking throughout interview sessions. The final technique utilized in this study to validate findings was access to an audit trail. Erlandson and colleagues, (1993) described how credibility is assessed in research.

It is assessed by determining whether the description developed through inquiry in a particular setting “rings true” for those persons who are members of that setting. Because these persons represent different constructed realities, a credible outcome is one that adequately represents both the areas in which these realities converge and the points on which they diverge (p.30).

Transferability

Transferability is the degree to which research findings can be generalized across contexts and participants (Lincoln & Guba, 1985). Transferability is particularly difficult in qualitative inquiry due to the in-depth and multifaceted methods of study this type of research employs. To establish transferability, the qualitative researcher should provide extensive descriptions of the context and participants in the study. This “enables observers of other contexts to make tentative judgments about applicability of certain observations for their contexts and to form ‘working hypotheses’ to guide empirical inquiry in those contexts” (Erlandson et al., 1993, p.33). Transferability was established through referential adequacy and thick, rich descriptions. Referential adequacy provided contextual meaning that supported data, constructions, conclusions, and the audit trail. Thick, rich descriptions of both the context and the participants provided a framework to guide similar studies with comparable contexts and participants.

Dependability and Conformability

Dependability refers to the extent research findings would be consistent across studies if new research were conducted in similar contexts and with similar participants (Erlandson, et al., 1993).

Access to an audit trail will supported dependability of findings and the research process.

Conformability is “the degree to which its findings are the product of the focus of its inquiry and not of the biases of the researcher” (Lincoln & Guba, 1985, p. 290). Conformability was achieved through access to the audit trail that included all documents, notes, transcripts, recorded interviews, and observations. All of these techniques helped establish trustworthiness by providing credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Erlandson et al., 1993). Table 3.1 depicts trustworthiness Criteria and Examples.

Table 3.1 <i>Trustworthiness Criteria and Examples</i>			
Criteria	Techniques	Result	Examples
Credibility (internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Prolonged engagement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Build trust • Develop rapport • Build relationships • Acquire comprehensive data • Acquire accurate and authentic data 	In the field from March 2015 to June 2015; follow-up communication occurred in June; methods of communication: emails, text messages, interview appointments, telephone calls, and face-to-face
Credibility (internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Member Checking 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Verify documentation • Verify conclusions 	During interviews, follow-up questions were used to verify statements and perceptions of the information. Follow-up questions were conducted via telephone calls and face-to-face to verify accurate conclusions made from the

			data
Creditability (internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Purposive Sampling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Site selections will provide 3-4 case studies to explore the role school culture plays in the advancement of educators 	Purposeful in the selection of site based on grid-group classification and administrators (criterion sampling technique)
Creditability (internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Persistent observation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Acquire comprehensive data Acquire accurate and authentic data 	Observation of participants and school environments during site visits, district meetings, and other engagements. Observation of school culture each time I visited the site
Creditability (internal validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Triangulation 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Verify data 	Multiple sources of data: interviews, observations, documents, websites, and emails
Transferability (external validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Referential adequacy 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide an inclusive depiction of school culture and the career advancement experiences of administrators 	Collected information from school websites, district and school communications; deans, assistant principals, principals, and executive directors were interviewed regarding career advancement
Transferability (external validity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Thick description 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Provide a data base for transferability Provide a vicarious 	Career advancement experiences of administrators; experience

		experience for the reader	of the participants and overall observations regarding the role of school culture; presentations of the schools
Conformability/ Dependability (objectivity)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Audit trail 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Allow auditor to determine trustworthiness of study 	Interview protocols, transcripts, notes, note cards, email exchanges, etc. are readily available for an audit
Table 3.1			

Summary

Using the case study model of inquiry, this study implemented surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis. Purposeful sampling procedures were used to select school sites and participants. Surveys were analyzed to gain a better understanding of the cultural context of the school environment as operationalized through Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology. Interview questions focused on culture and career advancement. Qualitative research design provided the context by which the worldview was grounded, that being case study inquiry. Case study methodology provided boundaries and focus for the study while affording latitude for the investigation to explore themes and ideas not yet encountered.

Data needed for this study included data gathered from a modified version of Harris's (2015) Cultural Assessment Tool (see Appendix D) and Cultural Preference Assessment Tool (see Appendix E). Data from the Cultural Assessment Tool instrument explained and described the cultural context of the school environment through the grid and group typology. Data from the Cultural Assessment Tool

determined the cultural preference of administrators. Grid and group theory was applied after data were collected and provided an overall orienting lens from which to view all data. All data provided needed information in exploring the role culture played in the career advancement of educators.

To validate the findings in this study, triangulation, purposive sampling, member checking, and access to an audit trail was presented. All of these techniques helped establish trustworthiness and provided credibility, transferability, dependability, and conformability (Erlandson et al., 1993).

CHAPTER IV

PRESENTATION OF CASES

Following the methodology outlined in Chapter III, this study explored career advancement in the context of culture. This chapter includes a detailed description of each of the three cases selected for this study. In order to present each case study in both historical and current perspectives, Hudson High School, Brown High School, and Wilson Academy High School are described using thick, rich language and details. Within each case study principals, assistant principals, deans, teachers, parents, and one executive director were interviewed to provide a comprehensive snap shot of the cultural context of each school. Each case study was identified through surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis. In this study, fictitious names were used to protect the confidentiality of each school and participant.

Hudson High School

Participant Profiles for Hudson

Interview participants for Hudson included one principal, two assistant principals, three deans, and three teachers. Table 4.1 shows the interview participants for Hudson High School.

Table 4.1

Interview Participants for Hudson High School

CASE STUDY	PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL(s)	DEAN(s)	TEACHER(s)
Hudson High School	Mr. Doss	Mr. Ellis Ms. White	Ms. Green Ms. Howard Mr. Oak	Ms. Carter Ms. Riggs Colonel Todd

Table 4.1

The Principal

Mr. Doss. Hudson High School employed a Caucasian, male principal between the ages of 49-56. He was in his third year as the principal. He spent 5-8 years as a teacher and 15 years as a principal. Mr. Doss had no aspirations to advance to a higher position and wanted to eventually retire from Hudson High School.

Assistant Principal(s)

Mr. Ellis. Mr. Ellis was an African American male assistant principal between the ages of 25-32. He spent three years as a teacher and one year as a dean at a different school. He had been an assistant principal at Hudson High School for two years. He had aspirations to advance to a higher position in the district and was actively seeking a principalship.

Ms. White. Ms. White was another assistant principal at Hudson. She was a Caucasian female between the ages of 41-48. She spent three years as a teacher at a different site and then moved to Hudson High School as a dean. She advanced from dean to assistant principal after one year and had

been an assistant principal at the site for four years. Ms. White had aspirations to advance but is unsure if she wanted to become a principal or an assistant athletic director for the district.

Dean(s)

Mr. Oak. Mr. Oak was a Caucasian male between the ages of 41-48. He spent 19 years as a teacher at Hudson High School and then advanced to a dean position. He had been a dean at the school for four years. He had aspirations to advance but was not actively seeking an assistant principalship.

Ms. Howard. Ms. Howard was a Caucasian female between the ages of 33-40. She spent 5 years as a teacher, 4 of those years at Hudson High School. She advanced from teacher to dean at Hudson. She was in her first year as a dean. She had aspirations to advance to a higher position and was actively seeking an assistant principal position.

Ms. Green. Ms. Green was a Caucasian female between the ages of 49-56. She spent almost 20 years as a teacher at a different school. She was in her first year as a dean. She had aspirations to advance to a higher position and was actively seeking an assistant principal position.

Teacher(s)

Ms. Carter. Ms. Carter had been a teacher at Hudson for 22 years. She taught science and was also the Science Department Chair. Ms. Carter was an alumnus of the school and served on several committees.

Ms. Riggs. Ms. Riggs had been a teacher at Hudson for over 25 years. She taught English and served as a mentor for new teachers. She conducted professional development with other teacher-leaders for the whole staff during monthly early-release days.

Colonel Todd. Colonel Todd had been the JROTC teacher for two years. He led the School culture Professional Learning Community (PLC) and was very active in several facets of the school. He

initiated the “Hail and Farewell” ritual where the staff met as a group once a year to hail new teachers and bid farewell to exiting teachers.

History and Setting

Hudson was a 5A high school located in Oklahoma. It was one of nine high schools within a large urban district. Hudson was situated across from an affluent neighborhood community. Many residents have lived in their homes for decades and are now retired. Despite the proximity to this affluent community, many of Hudson’s students come from low income areas in the city.

Founded in 1962, Hudson was the premiere high school in the district for over four decades. In 2001, Hudson saw a shift in their student demographic base. Ms. Carter, taught at Hudson for 22 years and attributes the shift to the incorporation of magnet high schools in the district, “...with the establishment of magnet high schools the top 25% of students in the district were no longer available.” Coinciding with the creation of academic magnets was the No Child Left Behind law mandating students could transfer to other schools in the district if that school was deemed “academically better” than their homeschool as measured by state exams. Ms. Carter reflected on this dichotomous reality for Hudson High, “...the top tier of students were lost to academic magnets...they were replaced by low-achieving students being bussed in from all over the city. We weren’t equipped to deal with these changes and the school suffered...changes in principals, teachers, and students were a result.” She went on to relay that dueling cultures from the clash of diverse student populations saw an even further decline in high-achieving students, many of whom retreated to suburban schools. Ms. Riggs, a 25 year veteran teacher at the site corroborated Ms. Carter’s account of the shift at the school, “I still remember the first day of school that year [2001]. I taught English II and English III at the time...I had less than 20 students in my English III classes that I had in English II the year before. They were all transfers...” In 2012, the district began placing an emphasis on students attending their homeschools. Moreover,

Hudson High became their own STEM Magnet School and a new principal was placed at the site. This triad of events created three years of success nostalgic of the early years according to Ms. Carter. Despite the tumultuous past few years described by Ms. Carter and Ms. Riggs, they never thought of leaving or transferring to another school. Hudson school pride and allegiance runs deep as evidenced by the 14 staff members who graduated from the high school and have returned to work at the school. Originally built in 1962, the school was dedicated to the memory of students and faculty who served in the United States Armed Forces.

Physical structures. Patriotism was a theme woven throughout the physical features and structures which made-up the high school. The best example of this concept was the newly built 12 million dollar Hudson Veterans Arena located adjacent to the campus. This multi-million dollar facility was adorned with American flags, military regalia, and sentimental features reminiscent of fallen soldiers. The most prominent display of this was a small table and chair display directly to the right of the entrance. In the corner of the entryway sat a small table with a worn pair of combat boots situated underneath. This display was set in remembrance of all the soldiers who would never come home. Full-size flags representing each branch of the military encompassed a circular structure located at the entrance of the arena. Stars and stripes were interwoven throughout the architecture within the facility. The wood finish of the basketball court was stained in dark and light stripes reflective of the American flag, a \$4,000.00 upgrade donated by one of the PTA parents. Over-sized basketball jerseys representing the school colors of red, white, and blue hung from the ceiling memorializing past players and state championship teams. The Hudson Veterans Arena provided a glimpse into the intangible sense of Hudson's patriotism, emphasis on athletics, and celebration of past accomplishments. Exhibiting less grandeur was the main building that anchored itself to academics and tradition.

Upon entering the main building, one of the first artifacts encountered attesting to the academic and tradition motif was a bulletin board displaying academic school data such as the school's report card, state test data, and ACT scores. In the middle of three hallways sat a roped-off section of floor tile created in the image of the school mascot, "The Patriot." The tile image was donated to the school by the class of 1969. Panoramic pictures of graduating classes decorated the main office alongside pictures of past principals. In the hallway a bulletin board depicting faculty members who were Hudson alumni adorned the hallway. Nestled beside this bulletin board was another display that welcomed the new superintendent of the district who was also a Hudson graduate. A television mounted in the commons area played a slideshow of "Patriot of the Month" students. A separate wing housed the Hudson High School STEM Academy. This wing included a classroom of robotics paraphernalia and other gadgets used to engineer projects.

Students. Seventy percent of the student population were eligible to receive free or reduced price lunch. The disseminated student data showed the ethnic make-up of the student body was the following: African American (34%), Caucasian (26%), Hispanic (24%), Native American (7%), and Multi-race (9%). Hudson graduates 70% of freshmen who begin at the high school. Moreover, mobility was a problem at Hudson and throughout the larger district in which Hudson was a part.

The majority of students came from single parent households. Many students came from low-income areas and will be the first to graduate high school or attend college. Despite the difficult circumstances many of these students experienced, one-third of Hudson's student population participated in Pre-Advanced Placement or Advanced Placement classes. Athletics and STEM were major pieces of the school culture. The Boys' Varsity Basketball Team won back-to-back state championships in 2013 and 2014 while the Robotics Team won two world championships.

Hudson High School placed a focus on students and school pride as evidenced through their school website which was dominated by March's "Patriot of the Month" students. These two Hispanic students discussed their role models, teachers who had the biggest impact in their lives, activities they were involved in, future goals, and gave a personal quote. On the left of the web page, upcoming events were listed including a televised piece featuring Hudson High School as Channel 3's "Cool School of the Week." Hudson's mission statement read, "College and career readiness is not a dream, it's a plan." Their vision statement was one word: "Achieve."

At Hudson, routines and rituals demonstrated and reinforced unity within the school. For example, morning announcements were read by the student council president:

Good morning Hudson Patriots! Our vision, achieve; our mission, college and career is not a dream, it's a plan! Please stand for the Pledge of Allegiance.

Each Monday, the alma mater was played over the intercom. Being a school known for their patriotism, when the alma mater was played; all students in the hallway stopped and listened or participated, while students coming late to school had to stand outside until the alma mater was complete. Along the same lines, at the beginning of a faculty meeting I attended, the faculty sang the alma mater before the meeting commenced. Another ritual included a small stuffed beanie baby known as "Pete the Patriot." During the staff meeting the parrot was given to a teacher doing an "outstanding" job of teaching, according to the principal, Mr. Doss. Evidence of another ritual ceremony was discussed by Colonel Todd of the JROTC program at the school and was called the "Hail and Farewell." This ceremony occurred at the end of each school year and was put in place to say farewell to staff members who were leaving and hail to the new staff members replacing them. As presented, many of the routines and rituals at Hudson come from military origins.

Faculty. Hudson served approximately 1,100 students in grades 9-12. The staff included 74 certified faculty members and of those members, 38 had more than 11 years of teaching experience. Faculty members felt a strong sense of loyalty to the school and group. This was evident when participants were asked what their favorite things about coming to work were. All participants mentioned the people they worked with. This indicated a strong-group connection existed at the school. Mr. Oak, a dean who began his career as a teacher at Hudson, depicted this idea when he described what he thought helped him advance, “I think being in the same place for 19 years...I’ve kinda worked my way through the school...been offered different positions...” Consequently, Hudson boasted very little teacher turnover as Ms. White, an assistant principal noted, “This is the third year in a row we have had no teachers leave our high school to take another teaching job at another school. They have only left to pursue other careers or retire.”

Teacher leadership opportunities were also a foundational piece of the school culture as Ms. Howard a dean at the site described, “...I think what’s helped me to move along in that process would be my administrator giving me the opportunity to have those experiences and to grow professionally...this year I have taken on the role of attendance dean...I’ve learned quite a bit from my experience...” As Ms. Howard discussed, Hudson’s focus on providing teachers with leadership roles gave her the opportunity to become an attendance dean at the site while still teaching two classes.

Meeting structures. Many structures were in place at Hudson that required meetings among staff members. According to Mr. Doss, teachers were expected to meet each week for an hour either in department meetings, team Professional Learning Communities (PLCs), early-release professional development days, or staff meetings. There were also committees that met monthly such as Instructional Council, Technology Committee, Library Advisory, Child Study Team, and Parent Teacher Association (PTA).

Parents and community. Parents and guardians were an integral part of the educational process at Hudson as evidenced by the large number of parents attending “Back to School Night” and parent-teacher conferences. Although many students came from single-parent households, parents and guardians still played an active role in the success and perpetuation of the school. Affirming a strong connection to stakeholder groups, this past year the alumni committee set up a scholarship fund for students. In addition, a corporate sponsored fundraiser netted nearly \$7,000.00 for the school. Over the past three years, the PTA took a more active role as a liaison between the school and the community. Responsibilities within this role, set forth by Mr. Doss, included securing financial and material resources for the school, promoting the school and its values to the larger community, and soliciting volunteers and community input to facilitate and enhance the educational process at Hudson High School.

Organization and Management Practices

Teaching and Leading

School team and structure. The new principal Mr. Doss was brought in to stabilize the environment after the school cycled through four principals in six years. Mr. Doss had a distinguished career in the district and held a reputation for dependability, commitment, and high integrity. With thirty years of experience as an educator, Mr. Doss felt he had attained his “dream job” and planned to stay at Hudson until he retired. With the constant change in leadership the school experienced prior to his tenure, Mr. Doss knew his first order of business was to re-establish trust and communication among the staff, students, parents, and the larger community.

Shared decision-making. He began this process by establishing a leadership team consisting of teacher-leaders, department chairs, counselors, and administrators. The team met monthly to discuss instructional topics, school issues, and to develop and monitor school goals. He also connected with the

Parent Teacher Association (PTA) to ask for their help in re-establishing trust and communication in the community. To do this, he created a committee with teachers, PTA members, community partners, parents, alumni, and students aimed at the creation, development, and implementation of a community vision for the school.

Rules, roles, and responsibilities. According to Doss, one of the most pivotal changes he made was re-organizing the roles and responsibilities of his three assistant principals based upon the strengths of each individual rather than their inherited roles. Placing key people in strategic roles was critical to the turnaround of the school, he acknowledged.

Linkages. As a result of the reorganization, alumni groups were contacted, community members were appointed to committees, community partnerships were cultivated, Advanced Placement student enrollment tripled, and Hudson saw the most successful athletic year since 1983.

Teacher-as-Leaders

In addition to these accomplishments, he appointed teacher-leaders to positions of authority; therefore, decentralizing power, while still maintaining a hierarchy where he retained the ultimate voice to make final decisions. Demonstrating this idea, Ms. Howard, a dean at Hudson advanced from a math teacher to a dean at the site. She described how teacher leadership opportunities at Hudson provided an avenue for her to advance. According to Howard, the Master Schedule and teacher allocations had to be manipulated to create this leadership role.

Professional development. Mr. Doss, explained how teachers showing competency in their roles could leverage opportunities to lead professional development and take on teacher leadership roles.

This year we have done...a professional development experiment...we chose some select teachers that we felt were strong in the classroom...hopefully we can create a spark or interest for teachers to have that desire to improve...in their career by watching a model teacher,

someone that is an accomplished educator...learning from the best...learning from mentors is a very powerful professional development tool...we try to create opportunities for teachers to grow professionally.

Ms. Howard reaped the rewards of this opportunity at Hudson, "...and I became a teacher-leader and modeled instructional strategies for other teachers...lead some PLCs...I think I was identified because I was a teacher-leader."

Mentors. Mentors and mentorships encompass both teaching and leading ideals at Hudson. Ms. Howard and Ms. White both experienced this phenomenon. Ms. White, described how having a mentor helped her advance to her role at the school.

...the teacher to dean was because of my first principal's encouragement. He saw something in me...he thought...I should go into administration...from dean to assistant principal, I had a principal that observed me every day as the dean and knew that I had the ability to be an assistant principal...he wanted me for an assistant principal based on what he saw me do every day and he fought for me...

Ms. Howard elaborated on how mentorship helped her advance to her role at the site.

...I taught one year at [Henry High School] and when my principal moved over to Hudson High School he brought me along with him...this is my fifth year and this year I have transitioned into attendance dean and algebra teacher.

During this exchange, I probed Ms. Howard further, "How did you get identified for that?" She explained, "Through my evaluator...they observed me using a strategy and then I would teach or model that for other teachers..." I then asked why she was identified as a dean, she clarified, "I think it was the

same process and my administrator knew that I was looking to advance and that I needed that mentor and the experience.”

Education as a Career

Horizontal Movement

Horizontal advancement opportunities within roles were discussed by participants as facilitators of their advancement. Ms. White reflected on her experiences.

I think within my assistant principalship...I am advancing and learning new things. I was not real strong in scheduling and curriculum but because I have worked with people who were strong in those they've pretty much held my hand and said I need your help with this...this is how it's done...I need you to do steps 1, 2, and 3, well then I learn how it's done and the next year it's ok, remember what we did? You're in charge this year of steps 4, 5, and 6 also. So I'd say the only advancement that I've done in the last two or three years is horizontal within my job. I have gone from just disciplinarian to more...curriculum...it's not my favorite thing but it definitely has broadened my marketability.

As Ms. White suggested, horizontal movement within her assistant principal role made her more marketable as a candidate to advance in the field of education. Mr. Doss, the principal also suggested his marketability was improved because of movement within his role.

I would say every job change for me was a vertical job change within my tenure...I did put on different hats as assistant principal but that was within the same system...gave me an opportunity to broaden my horizons in different aspects of the school...then every move after that...was a new challenge as a step up.

Financial

Ms. White loved her job and did not want to advance or leave her position but she expressed she would have to eventually in order to make more money to provide for her family. Consequently, hierarchy dictated salaries and therefore being an assistant principal at Hudson offered not only stagnant advancement opportunities but stagnant salaries as well. Conversely, Mr. Oak, a dean at Hudson High School who taught for 16 years before becoming a dean would receive a decrease in pay if he advanced to an assistant principal position, "It's not beneficial for me to go from dean to assistant principal because I would probably receive a pay cut." This phenomenon could be explained by the way assistant principals and deans were funded in the district. According to Ms. White, all assistant principals began at the same starting salary despite years of experience or educational attainment. Deans were funded as a teacher with a stipend. Their salaries took into account years of experience and educational attainment. Deans could also receive stipends for extra duties while assistant principals could not receive stipends for extra duties. Therefore, advancement can be stimulated as a result of financial need for assistant principals or advancement can be hindered as a result of financial need for deans. This funding formula used by the district highlighted a financial conundrum educators face.

Retirement

Despite the revolving principals Hudson went through the six years before Mr. Doss was placed at Hudson, infrequent principal turnover was status quo at the site. Even when former principals left or retired, they were rarely replaced through internal advancement. Moreover, since Hudson's inception in 1962, almost every principal has been placed there by the district. As Mr. Doss discussed, he intended to remain the principal of Hudson High School until he retired. With the rare movement associated with

the principal position at Hudson, retirement could limit opportunities for educators to advance at the site. Mr. Doss described his intentions.

My personal goal has never been at the central office, so at this point in my career, after 30 years, I reached my personal goal of high school or building-level principal. I am very satisfied and happy in this position and have no desire to move onto an assistant superintendency or superintendency. I think to do that [advance] that's more education, filling all those requirements needed to go to the next level.

However, as Ms. White revealed, educators in general might gain from others retiring when looking to advance. She expounded on this idea.

There is one position I would like in the district...the district athletic department...I do know that the current District Athletic Director doesn't plan on working a whole lot longer, when he retires, the assistants will move up which will leave the job open for me.

Networking

Networking was discussed by both Mr. Ellis and Ms. Green as an educational lever they utilized to advance to a higher position in the district. Ms. Green, a dean, relayed her efforts.

I've tried to do some networking with friends of mine...people that I have worked with before that are in principal positions at other schools just to get the word out. I'm constantly in contact with the district...I haven't actually talked to [the superintendent] recently but because I was on the [district advisory committee]...he knows me, he knows I'm wanting to make these moves...I was in the [Leadership Selection Academy]...last year and I thought it was really helpful...I

went through all of the principal steps and was successful, there just weren't any positions available and so that's why I took this position partly...

Mr. Ellis, an assistant principal also described networking within the school and the district, "...the way I am trying to advance is trying to learn as much as possible...being part of the assistant principal leadership group that they have here [the district], always talking to my principal and other assistant principals...getting ideas from them on how to solve issues...really being a continuous learner...trying to prove myself in my role as an assistant principal..."

Perceived Obstacles to Advancement

Preferential Bias

During our interview, Ms. White exposed challenges she faced while "climbing the ladder" as an educator.

My principal fought to move me from dean to AP, he went to the service center and asked for me but he had to settle for someone else first. There was...can I just say race? There was an African American male that the service center wanted to put in this building because of our demographics and the principal wasn't thrilled, but his hands were tied. So that man was hired instead of me but that man ended up getting a job somewhere else so the job became open again and the principal said, "I want her" and they backed down and let him promote me to AP [assistant principal].

District influence. This description of Ms. White's career advancement experiences revealed how district influence had adversely affected her advancement process. Ms. Howard, a dean also noted how the district process to advance educators was insufficient for its purpose.

Some things I have done to try and advance in the district would be applying to our district and the 5 steps that requires...reminds me of “Top Model” where you’re eliminated at every round. I don’t feel like the “Top Model” experience gives me any skills or adds anything to my ability. Do I feel like they’re able to assess what I know and what I don’t know? Yes...does it really help? No. I gain experience but I don’t get feedback so I don’t know if I did something adequate or I need to improve.

Ms. Green, another dean at Hudson High School also went through the district’s “Leadership Selection Academy” the previous year, “Yes, I want to be an AP [assistant principal], I went through the interview process and did well but there were no AP jobs available so I took this dean job.”

Ms. White described the district selection process as an obstacle to advancement for educators who are “doing the work” in schools and feel the “Leadership Selection Academy” is just another “hoop to jump through.”

I think it’s really hard in our district to advance...too many hoops to jump through. I don’t want to play that game. I don’t think I should have to create a fake PowerPoint or a fake PDP when I do that every day...If I can’t be promoted because of my merits and my people that observe me and the people that work for me, I don’t know if I want to go to a higher position in this district.

Hierarchy

Hierarchy was also noted as a perceived road-block for educators wanting to advance. Ms. White moved from dean to assistant principal at Hudson. She commented on climbing the hierarchical ladder.

I did one year as a dean then moved to AP [assistant principal], I haven't advanced since then...I have gone as far as I can go unless I apply at another school; he [Mr. Doss] is not going anywhere. Do I want to be a building principal? Not really, I would much rather be an assistant to a very good principal but I can't stay an assistant principal for the rest of my life and be able to provide for my family and my children who are in college...would I go out of the district for a higher position? Yes, but I'm not actively pursuing that because I actually love my job here and I like what I do.

Brown High School

Participant Profiles for Brown

Interview participants for Brown included one principal, one assistant principal, and four teachers. Table 4.2 presents the interview participants for Brown High School.

Table 4.2				
<i>Interview Participants for Brown High School</i>				
CASE STUDY	PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL(s)	DEAN(s)	TEACHER(s)
Brown High School	Ms. Anderson	Ms. Richards		Ms. Nichols Mr. Baird Coach Garth Ms. Darcy
Table 4.2				

The Principal

Ms. Anderson. Brown High School employed an African American, female principal between the ages of 41-48. She was in her first year as the principal of Brown High School. She spent over 17 years as a teacher and had been a principal for one year. She was in the final stages of earning her doctoral degree and expressed no aspirations to advance to a higher position at the time of her interview.

Assistant Principal(s)

Ms. Richards. Ms. Richards, an assistant principal at Brown High School, was a Caucasian female between the ages of 49-56. She spent over 17 years as a teacher and then became a curriculum specialist for the same district she was employed by. After a few years as a curriculum specialist she became an assistant principal at Brown High School. She was in her third year as assistant principal and had aspirations to advance to a principal position in the future.

Teacher(s)

Mr. Baird. Mr. Baird had been a social studies teacher at Brown for 18 years. He graduated from Brown and was the Social Studies Department Chair.

Ms. Nichols. Ms. Nichols was a foreign language teacher at Brown. She had been teaching there for eight years. Previous to her teaching career at Brown, she was an adjunct professor at a junior college.

Coach Garth. Coach Garth had been teaching science at Brown for six years. He coached football, volleyball, and golf at the site. He received several stipends for extra duty assignments.

Ms. Darcy. Ms. Darcy had been teaching math at Brown for four years. She was also the Pom sponsor and alumni of the school.

History and Setting

Brown High School was located in the center of a low socio-economic area known as “Little Baghdad” because of the violence and crime associated with the low-income housing that encompassed the school. Despite the framework that surrounded the school, this picturesque high school was steeped in deep tradition and academic excellence.

Established in 1913, Brown was known for excellence in academics, athletics, and fine arts. Boasting the only International Baccalaureate (IB) program in the district, Brown also offered the largest

and most diverse Advanced Placement courses in the district. Brown recently celebrated their 100th anniversary. Brown was an “Academic Magnet” High School where high-achieving students in the district could put in an application for a coveted spot at the school during their eighth grade year. Only 50% of applicants get accepted to the school each year. Brown High prides itself on two fundamental principles: academic excellence and multi-cultural diversity. These principles provided the fabric from which their vision was stitched:

Brown High School provides an academically rigorous education within an environment of multicultural diversity and develops all students’ critical thinking skills, which are necessary for success in a global society.

Demonstrating their commitment to multi-cultural diversity, Brown offered an extensive set of world language offerings unrivaled by other schools in the district such as Cantonese, French, Japanese, Modern Greek, German, and Russian, in conjunction with the traditional French and Spanish offerings. Substantiating Brown’s commitment to academic excellence, the school ranked among the top high schools in America according to News Week Magazine and the Washington Post. In addition, Brown was named the top high school in Oklahoma for the past eight years. Despite this success, seven years ago the school went through a period of revolving principals. The school experienced three new principals in three years. To stabilize the principalship, a former principal was brought out of retirement and placed at the school where he remained until his second retirement a year ago. During his tenure, teachers had much autonomy in their classrooms as Mr. Baird a social studies teacher at Brown described, “He had a hands-off approach to leadership. If it wasn’t broke, he wouldn’t fix it...as professionals we all appreciated that....” After a national search, Ms. Anderson, a graduate of the high school was selected to take over as principal. She described the process, “Considering this was a national search...out of 88 candidates...I have what they felt they needed to take this place to a new

level.” Ms. Anderson’s reflection of her hiring process appeared to allude to a shift in the school culture as a result of her leadership.

Physical structure. Academic excellence and multi-cultural diversity were themes interlaced throughout the physical features and structures that made-up the high school. Exemplifying these qualities was the entrance to the school. The entrance of the school was a semi-attached 30 foot archway made of light colored stone. Metal letters spelling B-R-O-W-N rested on a platform that extended out from the arch. Above the platform at the apex of the arch was a tiled scene depicting three African American historical figures. These scenes contained elaborate detail and color. The entrance to the school was made completely of glass and more archways throughout the school could be seen from outside. Quotes from African American historical figures adorned the hallways throughout the school. A large portrait of Einstein was situated at the end of the science hall. The commons area was set up like a restaurant with large circular tables and free-standing chairs. The school looked more like a university than a high school and was in immaculate condition, as if newly built. The structural beauty and the high-end features of the school hinted at a funding source other than the district budget. As the school reflected, there was a Brown Foundation that supplemented the budget and provided scholarships to students.

Students. Brown High School had over 1300 students who entered the school through a fiercely competitive application process. The student population was 35% Caucasian, 35% African American, 14% Hispanic while Multi-racial, Asian, and American Indian made-up the rest. Gifted and Talented students made-up nearly 50% of the population with less than 2% Special Education, and less than 1% English Language Learners.

Faculty. Brown High School had 102 faculty members with 57 of those members considered experienced teachers. Many of the staff members had advanced degrees. Twenty-four out of 78 staff

members were racial minorities. Three assistant principals, one dean, and the principal comprised the administration at Brown High School. The principal, Ms. Anderson established roles and responsibilities for each administrative member. Despite the roles and authority allocated to each member Ms. Anderson retained the power to make final decisions. According to Coach Garth, Mr. Simmons a longtime assistant principal at the site, could not adjust to the new way things were being done and retired at the end of the school year.

Meeting structures. Structures were in place at Brown that required teachers to meet on a bi-monthly basis. One meeting was a staff meeting and the other was a district professional development early-release day. Departments met when necessary which was usually two times per year, according to Coach Garth. A large group of teachers met informally every Friday during happy hour. When I asked Ms. Nichols if administrators were invited, she looked at me startled and exclaimed, “No! If they showed up we would all leave. They know they are not welcome.”

Parents and community. Parents play a significant role in the success and perpetuation of the school. Due to the school’s exclusivity and national rank across the states, parents wield more power than at regular schools. When Ms. Anderson took over, the clash of her leadership style and a unified vision created a divide among the staff and community members. Moreover, Ms. Anderson visualized a greater Brown while the teachers, other administrators, parents, and the community wanted to maintain status quo, according to Ms. Darcy. This clash perpetuated mistrust and a breakdown in communication and relationships.

Brown High School Foundation members have always been an integral part of site committees and decision-making. After Ms. Anderson took over as principal, according to Ms. Darcy a teacher and alumni of the school, she made all the decisions without the foundation, teachers, parents, or even her

assistant principal's input. With Ms. Anderson silencing stakeholder voice Ms. Darcy conceded, "...community relations have suffered. The foundation is not happy...."

With the change in leadership, group loyalty and commitment declined as evidenced by Ms. Nichols's willingness to move to another district and Coach Garth's readiness to quit coaching as a result of a scheduling change. Despite the changes implemented by Ms. Anderson, Mr. Baird remained committed, "...if you are doing the right thing she won't have an issue with you."

Organization and Management Practices

School and Team Structure

The organizational structure at Brown had become highly centralized due to the authoritarian leadership style of Ms. Anderson who felt she was placed at the school to elevate it to a new level.

Hierarchy of authority. To begin this process, Anderson regained control over key educational levers at the site such as staffing, curriculum, resources, and scheduling. Ms. Nichols experienced a change in her teaching schedule as a result of this control. She described this change.

I now babysit half the day instead of teach Cantonese. She [Ms. Anderson] determined that my Cantonese classes were too small so she combined them into four periods and gave me ACT Prep classes for the last two periods. I have no materials to teach the class and the kids don't want to be there, so I let them do whatever they want...I will be applying to teach in a different district this summer, then what will she do? There are only two Cantonese speaking teachers in the whole city...one is retiring and so I will apply for that job.

Another scheduling decision implemented by Ms. Anderson was having assistant coaches teach classes sixth and seventh hour and coach after school. When presented with this idea from an assistant principal, Coach Garth stated, "...then tell her I won't coach at all. I would tell her myself but her door is always closed and I'm not making an appointment to see her." New initiatives such as the ACT Prep

class were not valued by staff members. Instead of embracing initiatives, some staff members wanted to leave the school or quit their extra duty assignments.

Teaching and Leading

Chain of command. At Brown, power was based on hierarchical distribution of roles and responsibilities. This distinct chain of command created limited opportunity for career advancement within Brown. Moreover, when few leadership roles and opportunities are available within the school, vertical movement even within the upper echelons of the hierarchy was rare as Ms. Richards noted, "...when my former principal was here, I was in charge of professional development." Ms. Anderson the new principal took control of the professional development of the school. She displayed positional power based on a distinct chain of authoritarian command. Leveraging this power she regained responsibility and ownership of the school site, "This year we've kind of shifted our professional thinking hats in that we made it relevant and consistent throughout the year with what the needs were in our building...."

Authoritarian leadership. Regaining power over professional development supported the notion Ms. Anderson governed the school with an autocratic style of leadership. This type of leadership provided teachers, deans, and assistant principals little opportunity to lead or compete for advancement due to the explicit roles and responsibilities each member fulfilled.

Professional development. The shift in control over professional development was noted by Ms. Richards, an assistant principal also interviewed for the study, "...a lot of it is mandated by the district as to what will be covered and when but on the times when it's not when my former principal was here, I was in charge of professional development for teachers." With Ms. Anderson demonstrating her power at Brown, it was unlikely that she would allocate the responsibility of professional

development to any of her assistants. Therefore, professional development of the staff was a key lever Ms. Anderson took control over to show ownership of the school.

Horizontal advancement. Both administrative interview participants from Brown discussed how they were placed at Brown via horizontal movement from administrator to administrator rather than vertically from teacher to administrator. Ms. Anderson, the principal, described her journey from teacher to principal.

When I left here [the district] I was a teacher and when I went to [Texas] I went in as a teacher for a year and then I took the dean position and then after the dean position, I was able to get an assistant principal position for three years and after being an assistant principal, I was able to get my own building.

As Ms. Anderson explained, she was a teacher and felt she needed to leave the school district in order to advance and gain experience, "...the thing that helped me [advance] was leaving the district..." This discussion highlighted the idea that Ms. Anderson did not perceive internal advancement as an option. After she left the district she returned five years later to pursue the principalship at Brown High School. She reflected on this process.

I think even being presented this opportunity, being the person that hands-down got it [principal of Brown High School] in and of itself, it highlighted my career. Considering this was a national search...88 candidates, I have what they felt they needed to take this place to a new level.

This description of a national search to replace the retiring principal at Brown showed how Brown relied on horizontal movement of administrators from school to school rather than vertical movement from teacher to administrator within schools. Supporting this idea Ms. Richards, the assistant principal, moved from the service center to the assistant principal position at Brown High School.

I taught for 20 years and I wanted to do something else...I became the curriculum specialist for the district and I loved that but then it moved in a different direction...I ended up writing curriculum for the district for a year and that's when I said I need to be somewhere else so I applied to be an assistant principal and [Brown] was looking for somebody...

Weak affiliation. Ms. Anderson, although in her first-year as principal, expressed uncertainty when asked about her aspirations for career advancement.

I don't know...I'm kind of at a cross-road. I finished up my doctoral work; I'm currently ABD [all but dissertation] so I'm trying to figure out...what am I going to do when I grow up is kind of where I am. The fear that I have of going to a district-level position will be too far away from the work and then I will become very convoluted with politics and lose focus of what's best for kids and because of that fear, I have apprehensions leaving the classroom or leaving the building...but at the same time I think I could do very well especially at this district. There are things that I could bring to the table that benefit all kids in the district and so I guess for me it's trying to funnel, do I keep my skills and talents at Brown High School or do I try to do best for the greater good and I haven't got an answer yet.

Ms. Anderson supported this statement when she described being at a "cross-road" during her first year as principal with regard to her aspirations for career advancement. Being a product of horizontal movement from school to school rather than within the school appeared to cultivate less commitment and affiliation with the group.

Education as a Career

Qualifications, Expertise, and Competence

Horizontal movement. Horizontal advancement of educators was achieved through technical qualifications, expertise, and competence in a previous administrative role according to Ms. Richards, the assistant principal at Brown High School.

Professional development has helped me get to this position just because when I applied to an AP position, Brown High School wanted somebody strong in curriculum and academics so I just naturally fit the bill...I think it's just...getting out there and diversifying and learning as much as you can about your craft...being prepared educationally has helped me [advance].

Ms. Richards advanced horizontally from a district curriculum writing position to assistant principal at Brown. As she explained, she attributes her advancement to her qualifications and expertise.

Role competence. Ms. Richards described how her role competence and expertise helped her advance from writing curriculum for the district to assistant principal at Brown.

I have a natural drive to learn more so even when I was content being an English teacher for the rest of my life...every professional development opportunity...I did National Board and then I was the National Board Coordinator for this area and then I was an AP [Advanced Placement] Reader for seven years and I did...state test reviews. It [professional development] has helped me before to get to this position just because when I applied to be an assistant principal, [Brown High School] wanted somebody strong in curriculum and academics and so I just naturally filled that bill...

As Ms. Richards discussed, the district was looking for an assistant principal for Brown High School with specific technical expertise in curriculum and academics and she “naturally fit the bill.”

Individual attributes. Individual attributes can promote advancement for administrators possessing specific individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background the school or district desires. For instance, Brown High School has only had a few Caucasian principals since its inception; therefore, the district was looking for administrators with the specific race attribute of African American which may have been one of the reasons the search for Brown’s next principal was a national search. Ms. Anderson, the principal discussed how her individual attributes helped her advance in her career.

I think even being presented this opportunity, being the person that hands-down got it [principal of Brown High School] in and of itself, it highlighted my career. Considering this was a national search, 88 candidates, I have what they felt they needed to take this place to a new level.

When Ms. Anderson was asked about her aspirations for career advancement, she confirmed this principle, “...so I guess for me it’s trying to funnel, do I keep my skills and talents at Brown High School or do I try to do what’s best for the greater good...”

Wilson Academy High School

Participant Profiles for Wilson Academy

Interview participants for Wilson included one principal, one dean, one executive director, and one parent. Table 4.3 shows the interview participants for Wilson Academy High School.

Table 4.3					
<i>Interview Participants for Wilson Academy High School</i>					
CASE STUDY	PRINCIPAL	ASSISTANT PRINCIPAL(s)	DEAN(s)	EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR	PARENT(s)
Wilson Academy High School	Ms. Ward	N/A	Mr. Scott	Mr. Ross	Ms. Jackson
Table 4.3					

The Principal

Ms. Ward. Wilson Academy High School employed a Caucasian female principal between the ages of 49-56. She spent 9-12 years as a teacher, and she was completing her fourth year as principal of Wilson Academy High School. She had aspirations to advance but was unsure if school administration was the lever she would utilize.

Dean(s)

Mr. Scott. Wilson employed one halftime dean that also teaches English at the site. Mr. Scott was a Caucasian male between the ages of 25-32. He spent six years as a teacher, three of those years at Wilson Academy High School. He was in his second year as a dean. He had aspirations to advance to a higher position.

Executive Director

Mr. Ross. Wilson employed one executive director who worked directly with the board. Mr. Ross was a Caucasian male between the ages of 33-40. He spent 15 years as a teacher with many of those years at Wilson. He advanced from teacher to principal to Executive Director at Wilson. He was in his fourth year as Executive Director. He had aspirations to advance to a higher position; however, he held the highest position available in the charter school ranks. He still indicated aspirations to advance but is unsure of what that would look like.

Parent(s)

Ms. Jackson. Ms. Jackson was a parent of a student who attends Wilson. Her son was a freshman when the fire destroyed the building where Wilson Academy High School once was located.

History and Setting

Wilson Academy High School was an “application only” charter school, specializing in the arts and sciences. It served nearly 300 high school students in grades 9-12. Wilson made its home in a refurbished elementary school after a fire destroyed their first location. According to their website, Wilson’s vision was for students *to become life-long learners who succeed in higher education, work and life in a global society.*

Physical structures. The school building itself had a “homey feeling” due to the warm, rich wood that covered the floors and paneled the walls. The wooden floors creaked and the hallways were dimly lighted, reminiscent of an English Boarding School. The commons area was abuzz with students charging their phones, studying, or talking with their friends. It was obvious uniforms, colored hair, and piercings were not prohibited at the school. When I entered the office, I was greeted by two individuals I assumed were secretaries, although no formal name-tags or identification plaques were present. After a few minutes, a pleasant-looking woman in jeans introduced herself as Patty [Ms. Ward], the principal. She took me back to her office, an eclectic space with parakeets in cages, a coffee area, an old wooden desk, and a soft leather couch. Throughout our interview, we were interrupted by teachers who walked into her office without knocking just to say hello or to warm up their coffee. After the interview, we took a tour of the building. As we walked into each classroom, teachers and students greeted us; they were not at all surprised to see the principal in their classroom. Ms. Ward seemed to know the majority of students by name and asked personal questions about their activities and lives. In one chemistry classroom she walked over to a student and said, “Hey Taylor, it’s good to see you today; we missed you yesterday.” On our way back through the wood-accented hallways, the executive director, Mr. Ross was in the hallway greeting students. When he saw us he joked that his interview with me was better than hers. We both laughed.

Faculty. Twenty-five teachers made-up the faculty at Wilson. On Wilson's website there was a picture of each teacher accompanied with questions and answers about themselves. The questions asked, when they joined Wilson, what college they graduated from, why they chose to work at Wilson, and interesting facts about themselves. Not only did this page celebrate teachers it also included support staff such as the receptionist and café clerk.

Individual autonomy was the fabric that made-up the academy guiding both teachers and students. Policies and procedures such as school uniforms and weekly staff meetings were non-existent. Teacher turnover was rare and Ms. Ward conceded only two teachers had left during her four year tenure as principal, one moved out of state and one decided to stay home and raise her children.

Mr. Ross, the Executive Director, detailed how the faculty has equal partnership at the school when it comes to solving problems and making decisions.

I think a lot of administrators like order...a school like ours where we let teachers have a lot of autonomy...a lot of administrators couldn't handle that...I want to say, "This is how things are done" and I want everyone else, "Ok, thank you." This is not a school where you could do that... This is where you say, "Hey, here's a problem, let's all work together," then you have a lot of conversation, a lot of back and forth...

According to Wilson's website, the faculty was the foundation their success was built on.

We believe our core strength is passionate, highly-qualified, professional faculty, who provide dynamic, rewarding and individualized learning experiences for students.

Students. Wilson Academy High School served around 300 students. Individual autonomy was a cultural element embraced by students and the school community as a whole. This was evidenced in the “Purpose of the School” found on the school’s website.

WAHS uses the charter school framework, including choice and non-selective enrollment, to collaborate as students, faculty and parents to cultivate a high quality educational community that nurtures mutual respect, individualism, critical thinking, creativity in teaching and learning, life-long learners, and responsible citizens...We believe in creating a supportive and responsive learning environment with high standards and expectations for all students which compels them to be active participants in their own education.

Student autonomy was also reflected in the lack of policies and procedures governing uniforms, disciplinary action, tardies, and enrollment selection.

Parents and community. The intense loyalty to the school felt by staff, students, parents, and the school community was displayed on a state level two years ago when a fire destroyed the school. The news media was there as the school burned and students, parents, and staff members were all captured on camera sobbing and lamenting the loss of the school. As Ms. Jackson, the parent of a freshman at the academy put it, “I felt like I was watching my own home burn down. We were all traumatized.” News of the school fire gained statewide attention. By the next day, plans to open the school in a new location had been made and students, staff, parents, and the school community were all pitching in to open the new school. Donations poured in and within one week, classes resumed in a new school building.

Organization and Management Practices

School Team and Structure

Ms. Ward had been the principal of Wilson for the past four years. Previous to her principalship, she taught English at the school. Mr. Ross the previous principal now turned executive director of the school discussed Ms. Ward's pathway to the principalship:

...at the time we only had a single director that did everything, director and principal role was all one person and so that person retired suddenly...they hired an interim director, he then hired me as principal...he was basically grooming me to take over as executive director the next year and while we were kind of making those plans we started talking to Ms. Ward about moving into the principal role...this is our fourth year, Ms. Ward and I, she's the principal and I'm the executive director.

Ms. Ward described how the process of her principalship organically evolved:

...as it turned out, the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role...it was this natural but kind of wandering, intentional in an accidental kind of way...

Teaching and Leading

As Ms. Ward took over the principalship, she reflected on her primary purpose "to grow teachers" and "to find a way to foster that confidence in teachers that they are making a profound impact."

Shared decision-making. Shared decision-making and equal partnership in the educational process was of vital importance at Wilson Academy High School. Reinforcing this principle, "administration" at the site consisted of the principal and a part-time dean that was also an English teacher at the school. Teachers even had a voice in their own evaluation process as Ms. Ward conveyed.

...because of our autonomy for accountability, that is the charter school mandate, we have our own kind of homegrown evaluation. Teachers are not tenured and so everyone in the building has a one year contract. So that changes our culture significantly...it is not a weighty thing

though. I think in some environments it is this nail-biting every year...the carrot or the stick...our teachers and our culture is about innovation. It's about, how can I grow? It's about teacher's curiosity and it's about them...is my contract going to be renewed is not part of the conversation.

Autonomy. One core value embraced by both staff and students was individual autonomy. Mr. Scott both a teacher and dean at the site reflected on the autonomous nature of teaching and learning at Wilson Academy:

Students and teachers alike attach so much of their personal senses of self to education that it becomes possible to, not only impart subject area knowledge to people, but to help develop their taste, confidence, sense of humor, moral compass, and future aspirations in a way that almost no other sector has the power to do. At Wilson, this pursuit under-girds every process, interaction, and resource to the point that an entirely individualized and transformative environment has emerged.

Professional development. After a fire consumed Wilson Academy High School, the school was relocated to a new part of town and thus a new school community. The relocation of the school to a new community presented many problems the school had to confront as Ms. Ward discovered:

We moved into this building after the fire. We crossed the historic racial divide line of [Jenkins Boulevard], having been in midtown...we had a lot of challenges; our demographic base, our parents were challenged in thinking about that, our teachers were challenged about what the legacy of this move would be for us...culturally, would we change? If we are changing, how do we embrace that as strength for us rather than us all be unprepared and so that central issue of cultural competency...of education for diversity for teaching a new way. That was a thread of

just the undercurrent of conversation that we were having on so many levels. So that became this topic that I knew I had to address.

To address the issue of cultural competence, she leveraged professional development and guest speakers.

...little by little I began planning the professional development for the next year...we started with a yearlong theme...in response to some of these things and so it was planning guest speakers who were part of our community but were also part of the larger community that would speak...we did book studies...we did small groups, very informal but I wanted the conversation to be this constant thing...opportunity for information, basis for engagement, complicated conversations, all of these things that then the teachers own questions, own explorations could kind of guide.

Although the move after the fire was transformational in both culture and proximity, the strong-group dynamic embedded within Wilson Academy and the values within the culture embraced by the group as a whole served to strengthen the bond among stakeholders.

Internal advancement. Wilson exclusively selected members within the school to advance as Ms. Ward explained, "...because I worked here at the time...I was able to step into a principal role." The executive director, Mr. Ross conveyed a similar advancement experience at the site.

I was band director and then I became a principal here. While I was a band director, I was finishing up my master's, so for one year I was a principal and then I became executive director, though technically at first my title was "director" and then we added the "executive" so that people who worked in other non-profits would...have a sense of what I did...

As Ms. Ward explained she was able to advance from teacher to principal, and Mr. Ross was able to advance from teacher to principal to executive director at the site. The dean, Mr. Scott, verified this idea when he discussed his internal advancement experience.

I have always thought I would transition into administration. It wasn't until coming to Wilson I realized the practical steps to progress with that goal. I am graduating with my Master's in May...started this process after conversations with administration here about my future.

Mentor/Mentorship. Mentors or mentorships was also a leadership lever utilized at Wilson. This was evidenced by Mr. Ross, the executive director's account of how he came to his career.

I started off as a band director...I stayed at that for 11 years...I was here at the school for many of those years...I felt like there was going to be some opportunities for me to move up. Didn't really have any formal plans on how to move people into administration...I knew there was going to be some options there so I went back and got my master's...at the time we only had a single director...director and principal role...so that person retired suddenly...they hired an interim director...he then hired me as principal...he basically groomed me to take over as executive director...the next year we started talking to Ms. Ward about moving into the principal role...

This dialogue emphasized the central role mentoring played in the career advancement of Mr. Ross. Ms. Ward also expressed how important this mentorship was to her advancement, "...the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role following Mr. Ross...I have a great relationship with Mr. Ross, he and I are a phenomenal team...I wouldn't be able to it without that really close relationship..." Mr. Scott also included this theme in his interview, "The whole of the administrative staff at Wilson is currently pursuing avenues of further education in their respective fields...so that

culture of achievement really resonated with me and truly raised the bar in terms of my expectations of my own development.”

Linkages. The principal, Ms. Ward, described how linkages and connections within Wilson Academy was an important element to retaining her leadership at the site.

When I have taught at big districts you might know one or two parents so there’s a piece of that that resonates with me...there’s times I think it would be nice to have a really big ship but then I think, can you scale a mountain that big? I don’t know if that would be a good fit for me...My interest is very human and one of the little gifts from this small place is this is a community you can wrap yourself around- 300 students and 25 teachers- you can know everyone by name and something of their life story.

Education as a Career

Roles and Relationships

Role competence. Role competence was noted by Ms. Ward as a factor that promoted her advancement. She expounded on her competence, “I know that I could if I wanted to throw my hat in the ring and probably land a big high school job someplace, I know I have the skills and ability to do that but that doesn’t interest me.”

Teamwork. Teamwork was noted as a critical element that made Wilson unique from other environments. Mr. Ross discussed teamwork and collaboration at the school,”...this is where you say, ‘Hey, here’s a problem, let’s all work together,’ and then you have a lot of conversation...a lot of back and forth...” As the executive director described teacher voice and shared decision-making was the core

of Wilson's culture. Ms. Ward confirmed how teamwork and collaborative planning initiated professional development at the site.

...small groups, very informal...opportunity for information, basis for engagement, complicated conversations...I really wasn't sure exactly where we would go but just creating that space and putting a few structures in place it was kind of free to go that direction...most of the professional development happens that way...most of the time that comes in-house and it's teacher sharing, this is what I do, this is what works for me...

Internal advancement. Teacher voice, opportunities to lead, and the mistrust of outsiders, all work together to propel internal advancement, as Ms. Ward described, "...because I worked here at the time, the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role." Mr. Ross also had a similar advancement experience, "I was band director and then I became a principal here."

Perceived Obstacles to Career Advancement

Limited Positions Available

A theme specific to charter schools discussed by the executive director and the principal was the limited number of administrative positions available in this type of school. Mr. Ross discussed this limitation: "I work directly with the board so in this position [executive director] that's as far as it goes." Ms. Ward also mentioned the lack of available positions found in this environment, "The only higher position is Eric's job [executive director] and I don't have my sights set on that [position]."

Roles and Relationships

One perceived obstacle noted by Ms. Ward resulted from her advancement experience from a teacher to a principal and the subsequent change that created in her role and relationships. She described this change.

...it is challenging to be a teacher and then become an administrator...when I stepped into that role my image was very much about shepherding...being a pilgrim alongside...a very companion-based leadership model...and so my role I saw as a facilitator and mentor...but what I realize is administration, because I think the corporate business machine factory model of that has a way of skewing the image of anyone in leadership, but especially in schools...so for me what I realize is, I thought I was doing this and realized even if I was doing this it was being interpreted from a different lens, the principal lens as opposed to the shepherd lens or a fellow pilgrim lens...

Ms. Ward continued to expound upon this challenge throughout the interview.

...the nature of going from a peer to a supervisor changes interpersonal relationships and there is a real human loneliness. I don't feel isolated but I would say there are times where I feel solitary...you know things that others can't know, you feel things that others can't feel...My world is seeing the big picture and all the pieces that are working or not working, and there's not necessarily a place to share that...one of the limitations of the cultural animosity or perceived conflicts between charters and traditional public schools is that a larger community of peer principals is not available to me where in other schools the principal can have a retched day...call that principal friend in another building...I don't have access to that...there's a real piece that I would say is loneliness that's different than what I feel inside the building...here I just feel like it's solitary...I miss the classroom, I miss teaching.

Accordingly, a shift in roles at Wilson resulted in the natural separation that occurs between teachers and administration. Ms. Ward experienced this as a sense of loss she felt in relationships and community after her advancement. This phenomenon was felt so strongly by Ms. Ward that she considered an alternate career pathway, "...so I don't have plans to leave this position but I don't have a sense that this is the place I would stay forever." Indicated as a major obstacle, Ms. Ward discovered the attributes and values Wilson fostered in her as a teacher isolated her as a principal.

Summary

Chapter IV included a detailed description of Hudson High School, Brown High School, and Wilson Academy High School in both current and historical perspectives. Within each case study principals, assistant principals, deans, teachers, parents, and executive directors were interviewed to provide a comprehensive snap shot of the cultural context of each school. The stories of the three high schools are presented to help explain the culture of each school in the context of teaching and leading. Chapter V analyzed the three schools through the lens of Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology in order to understand how different cultural environments supported and inhibited the career advancement of educators.

CHAPTER V

ANALYSIS OF DATA

Data were collected from a variety of sources including observations, interviews, school tours, documents, artifacts, and school website information. Information presented in Chapter IV is used to analyze the data in this chapter. Chapter IV presented a comprehensive portrait of the three schools used in this study, providing the setting to explore how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators. First, this chapter presents data on how, according to Douglas's (1982) Typology, Hudson High School was classified as a corporate environment, Brown High School was classified as a bureaucratic environment, and Wilson Academy High School was classified as a collectivist environment according to Douglas's (1982) Typology. Next, each case study or unit of analysis was evaluated according to the cultural elements embedded in each environment. Finally, the chapter analyzes the data through the lens of grid and group typology to explore how different cultural environments promote and inhibit the career advancement of educators within those settings.

Grid and Group Analysis

As discussed in detail in Chapter II, Mary Douglas's (1982) Typology of Grid and Group provided a theoretical frame to understand school culture in this study. Harris (2015) noted the benefits of this theoretical framework for understanding, describing, and explaining school culture.

Grid and group provides a matrix to classify school contexts and draw specific observations about individuals' values, beliefs, and behaviors. It is designed to take into account the total social environment as well as interrelationships among school members and their context (p. 37).

The Corporate Environment of Hudson High School

Hudson High School is classified as a corporate school environment. Corporate environments are characterized by strong-grid, strong-group dynamics. The staff at Hudson High School works together as a cohesive unit to accomplish a unified vision of teaching and learning. Power is delegated to those teachers showing expertise in specialized areas and capacity to lead. Mr. Doss, the principal, maintains the power to make final decisions. To foster unity and commitment from the staff, social interactions are built into the workday. These interactions take the form of Professional Learning Communities, "teacher friend groups," mentorships, and committees. Informal group interactions such as "The Lunch Bunch," and "choir practice" or happy hour at a nearby bar serve to support the group dynamic at Hudson.

The strong-grid distinction associated with corporate environments is evidenced at Hudson by the clearly defined roles of members and the hierarchy that reinforces the roles. In addition, power and authority is distributed among few staff members based on skills and abilities. There is a clear hierarchy embedded in the culture, with Mr. Doss maintaining positional power and authority. Another example of the hierarchical element embedded within Hudson's school culture is represented in one of the professional development initiatives implemented at the school. School administrators identified several key instructional strategies successful classroom teachers were implementing. Administrators then

ranked teachers under each strategy based on their skill and ability to model each strategy. Only 16 out of the 65 classroom teachers were selected as model implementers. After teachers were ranked, all teachers were required to identify a weakness in their teaching based on one of the strategies. Teachers would then observe a model teacher listed under that strategy and write an action plan on how they will incorporate the strategy in their classroom. According to Mr. Doss, this initiative was very successful and all teachers participated. The corporate environment is conducive to this type of professional development because members understand and embrace specialized roles and responsibilities based upon specialized knowledge and skills. In this instance, ranking teachers according to specialized expertise grants provisional power and status to few members of the organization. Due to the deep commitment felt by the group to accomplish group goals, this initiative was embraced by the staff. This deep allegiance and commitment embodies the strong group element of a corporate cultural environment.

According to Harris (2015), strong-group environments support corporate commitments, many social interactions, strong affinity toward group goals and group preservation. The strong-group classification of Hudson High is evident in the fusion of stakeholder groups and their commitment, beliefs, and goals, all working for the greater good of the school and the values it represents.

Many features support the strong-group ideal of Hudson's corporate environment such as student and teacher awards and recognition, the Parent Teacher Association, community partnerships, the large number of teachers who have worked at Hudson for more than 10 years, and informal and formal groups all supporting the strong-group dynamic of the school culture. Physical features supporting the strong-group culture at Hudson was the Marquee which read, "Congratulations Teacher of the Year, Lynn Nosh!" In addition, the PTA was responsible for the immaculately manicured lawn at the front of the school. Several red rose bushes growing in a large stone receptacle at the entrance of the school were

also provided by the PTA as the sign next to the roses read. To the right of the roses, bricks with alumni names and dates orchestrated in a makeshift cobblestone path alongside the grass and benches could be seen.

Perhaps the most significant example of strong-group culture was the large number of staff members that are Hudson High graduates. Eighteen of the 74 staff members employed at the school were Hudson alumni. As one teacher and coach stated, “I always knew I wanted to return to Hudson to teach and coach. I still can’t believe it worked out, this has been my dream for a while.” As Mr. Doss enters his fourth year as principal of Hudson High School, fostering a sense of trust and community is more important than ever, “...not only sustaining community but extending the bridge across the gap of community wherever that takes me.”

Using the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015), Hudson High School was classified as a strong-grid, strong-group environment consistent with Douglas’s corporate prototype. Surveys, interviews, observations, and document analysis conducted in this study supported this classification. Figure 5.1 reveals Hudson High School was classified as a corporate school environment based on the responses of 23 teachers, counselors, and administrators in the school.

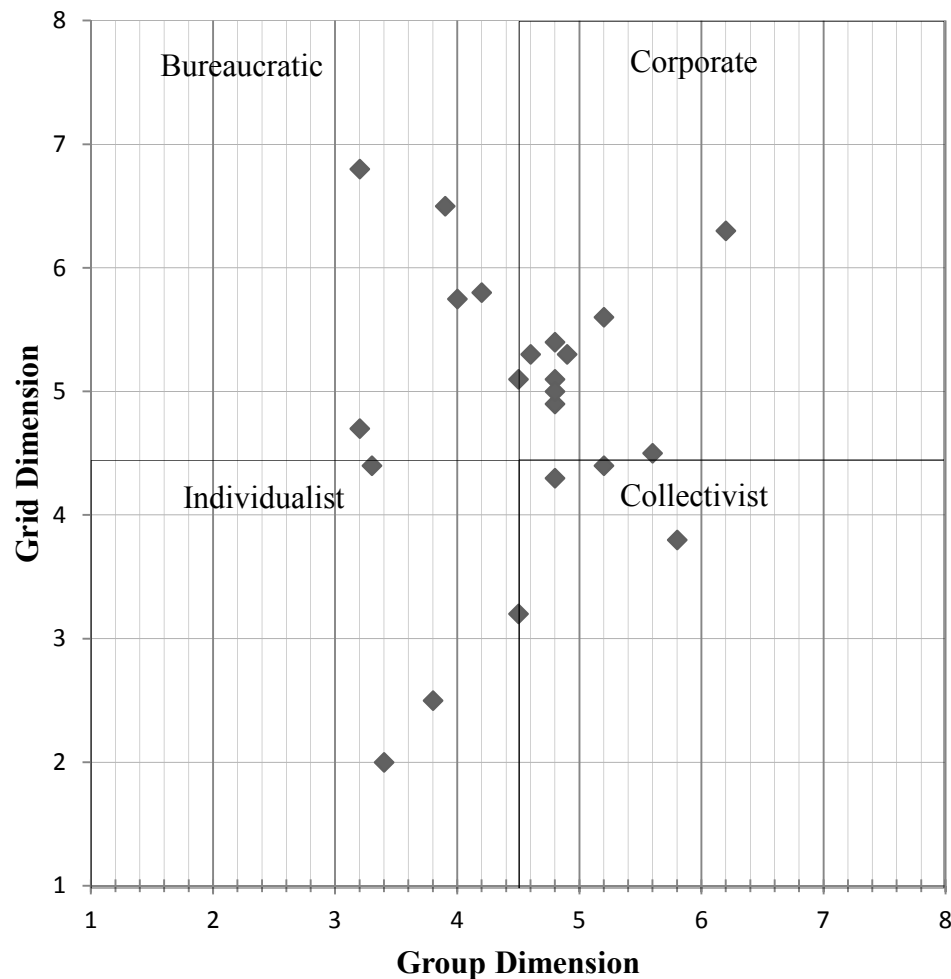


Figure 5.1: Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) Responses for Hudson High School: Corporate

Responses to the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) ranged from a minimum value of one and a maximum value of eight. Twelve questions addressed the grid dimension of the school and 12 questions addressed the group dimension of the school. For each respondent an average for each dimension was

represented as (Xgrid, Ygroup) value. The (X,Y) value was then applied to Douglas's (1982) cultural typology. An ordered pair value for each respondent was plotted in one of the four cultural prototypes. Each value in the pair represented a data point and was plotted on the scatter plot graph. The concentration of individual responses in a specific cultural quadrant classified each school environment into corporate, bureaucratic, and collectivist cultural environments. An individualistic cultural environment was not represented in this study.

Strong-grid dimension of Hudson. Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) survey data showed Hudson High School was a strong-grid environment. Out of the 23 respondents, 15 ranked the grid dimension as strong and eight ranked the grid dimension as weak. The two strongest ranked grid items among respondents regarded hiring decisions and member roles (See Appendix E). Consistent with corporate culture, strong-grid items reflected specialized rules and roles and centralized power structures. These grid rankings support the corporate culture classification of Hudson High School.

The weakest ranked grid item among respondents regarded students taking ownership of their own education. Figure 5.3 shows the weakest ranked grid item for Hudson High School (See Appendix E). Indicative of a strong-grid culture, this grid item revealed student's roles and responsibilities in the corporate environment are well defined.

Eight responses were possible for each grid item. Grid scores ranged from 2.43 to 7.35. Grid data indicated diverse perspectives existed regarding the grid dynamic of the school culture. This was evidenced by the large variance in the data and the significant standard deviation accompanying the grid results. Despite these sizable margins, the majority of respondents indicated strong-grid characteristics were embedded in the environment and therefore was classified as a strong-grid environment.

Strong-group dimension of Hudson. Cultural Assessment Tool survey data determined Hudson High School was a strong-group environment. Of the 23 respondents, 16 members ranked the

group dimension as strong and seven ranked the group dimension as weak. The two strongest ranked group items concerned allegiance/loyalty to the school and responsibilities for teachers and administrators are clear with much accountability. Figure 5.4 portrays the two strongest ranked group items for Hudson High School (See Appendix E). Consistent with a strong-group environment, the faculty at Hudson ranked allegiance and loyalty to the school and roles and responsibilities of staff are clearly communicated as significant group items. Both items support the strong-group classification of the school.

The weakest ranked group item concerned extrinsic reward beneficiaries. Figure 5.5 shows the weakest ranked group item for Hudson High School (See Appendix E). Supporting the strong-group classification, Hudson participants scored individual extrinsic rewards as the weakest group item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015).

Eight responses were possible for each group item. The mean of the group items was 4.86. Responses ranged from 3.91 to 6.35. According to this data, respondents had a more consistent perception of the strong-group dynamic embedded in the culture than their perception of the grid dimension of the school environment.

Overall, 11 of the 23 respondents classified their school culture as corporate, five classified their school culture as collectivist, four classified their school culture as bureaucratic, and three classified their school culture as individualistic.

The Bureaucratic Environment of Brown High School

Brown High school is classified as a bureaucratic school environment, characterized by strong-grid, weak-group elements. Strong-grid factors embedded in Brown's cultural environment include the following:

- Autocratic rule by the new principal, Ms. Anderson
- Distinct chain of command represented in hierarchical systems of power and authority
- Levers of schooling are controlled by few members of the staff
- Roles and responsibilities are clearly defined and designated by the principal
- Lack of teacher voice/input

Due to the authoritarianism social game embedded within the culture, Ms. Anderson wields positional power through a distinct chain of command. With this power resides responsibility and ownership of the school site.

According to Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) results, Brown High School was classified as a strong-grid, weak-group culture, which according to Douglas's cultural typology, is indicative of a bureaucratic environment. Surveys, interviews, observations, and documents collected in this study support this classification. Figure 5.6 shows Brown High School as a bureaucratic school environment based on the survey responses of six teachers in the school.

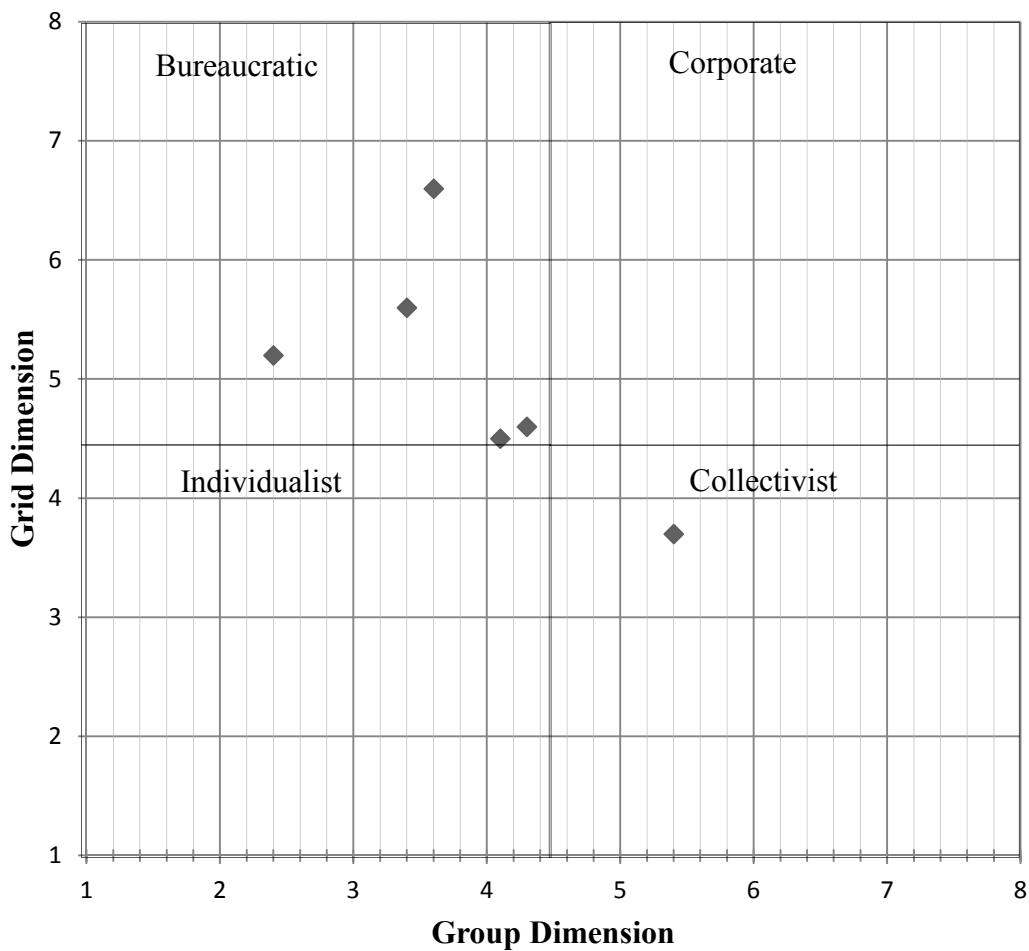


Figure 5.6: Results of the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Brown High School: Bureaucratic

Responses to the Cultural Assessment Tool ranged from a minimum value of one to a maximum value of eight. Twelve questions generated the grid score in terms of weak and strong delineations for the

school and 12 questions generated the group score in those same terms. Each respondent received an average grid score and an average group score which represented the value of the ordered pair (X_{grid} , Y_{group}). Each individual score was then plotted in one of Douglas's (1982) four cultural prototypes- bureaucratic, corporate, collectivist, or individualist.

Strong-grid dimension of Brown. Survey data showed Brown High School was a strong-grid environment. Five of the 6 respondents ranked the grid element of the school as strong. Figure 5.7 shown in Appendix E illustrates the strongest ranked grid items addressed authority structures and hiring decisions. Strong-grid environments are characterized by hierarchical structures, authoritarian rule, and centralized power (Harris, 2015). Brown High School participants ranked centralized/hierarchical authority structures and centralized hiring decisions as the most significant grid items reflecting their culture. These strong ranked grid items reinforce Brown's classification as a bureaucratic cultural environment. Figure 5.8 (See Appendix E) shows the weakest ranked grid item for Brown High School addressed students taking ownership of their own education. Consistent with a strong-grid environment, students in the bureaucratic environment fulfill specific roles and responsibilities within the strong-grid culture. This is reflected in the weak-grid designation teachers ranked *students are discouraged from taking ownership of their own education*. This information bolsters the strong-grid characterization of Brown High School.

Eight responses were possible for each grid item. The mean of the grid items for Brown High School was 5.03. Grid score items ranged from 3.33 to 7.17. Such a large dispersion in the grid data set indicates an incongruity in the perception of the grid dynamic within the school as a whole. Despite the variance in grid scores, a closer look at individual responses revealed the majority of respondents scored Brown as a strong-grid culture. Moreover, only one respondent ranked 1 of the 12 grid items in a very weak delineation.

Weak-group dimension of Brown. Survey data revealed Brown High School was a weak-group environment. Five of the 6 respondents classified the group dynamic as weak. The weakest ranked group item addressed the socialization and work activities of educators. Figure 5.9 (See Appendix E) represents the weakest ranked group item in the survey. Indicative of a weak-group environment, Brown High School respondents reported a weak association between socialization and work as incorporated or united activities. This weak-group delineation supports the bureaucratic classification of Brown's cultural environment.

The strongest ranked group items addressed allegiance/loyalty to the school and responsibilities of teachers and administrators are clear with much accountability. Figure 5.10 (See Appendix E) shows the strongest ranked group items on the survey. The strongest ranked group items for Brown mirrored the strongest ranked group items for Hudson, the corporate culture in this study. Despite much allegiance and loyalty indicated by 5 of the 6 Brown respondents, the other 11 group items were ranked at or below neutrality. Coupled together, this information might suggest an allegiance to the school was felt by the respondents but a feeling of disconnect with the culture embedded in the environment was stronger.

The mean of the group items for Brown was 3.88. Group responses ranged from 2.83 to 6.67. As with the grid item responses, the data indicated a lack of consensus in the perception of the group dynamic of the school environment. A more confined view of the individual group items revealed only one respondent classified the group dynamic as strong.

Overall, five respondents classified Brown High School as a bureaucratic school culture and one respondent classified the environment as a collectivist school culture.

The Collectivist Environment of Wilson Academy High School

Wilson Academy High school is classified as a collectivist school culture characterized by weak-grid, strong-group features. This type of environment promotes unity, distributive leadership, collaboration, competition, autonomy, and group preservation. Roles in a collectivist environment are earned and few power distinctions exist within roles.

Douglas (1970) explained this environment in terms of power and authority, “Preferring equality, such a group would be handicapped by problems of leadership, authority, and decision-making” (p. 6). Egalitarianism is valued as this environment’s social game. Egalitarianism places a high value on unity, equal distribution of teaching supplies and space, suspicion of those outside the school community that may want to help, conformity to the norms of the group, as well as rejection of authoritarian leadership and hierarchy (Harris, 2006, p. 136).

Decentralization of power and equality of voice is a foundational piece of Wilson’s school culture. These values are espoused in the way professional learning happens at Wilson, as Ms. Ward explained.

There are times where we have specific training...most of the time that comes in-house and it’s teacher sharing...so everything I would say, it is rare for us to bring someone in from the outside, very rare. So I would say almost everything happens organically. I also think my mission is to grow our teachers...when I see them doing something innovative that’s making a difference, I want to showcase that...so I try to create opportunities for them to show the other faculty, not necessarily in a training...but exposure, creativity, thinking differently and that kind of cross-pollination...

Ms. Ward’s description of professional learning also depicts the absence of policies and procedures governing teaching and learning processes at the site. This is characteristic of a weak-grid environment. In addition, her description reflects the high value placed on individual autonomy and the mistrust of

outsiders also indicative of weak-grid environments. Wilson Academy is classified as a strong-group environment. Strong-group characteristics embedded within Wilson's culture include:

- Linkages with the school community
- Unity and equality of teacher voice
- Shared school goals
- Collaboration and teamwork
- School preservation
- Strong affiliation and commitment to the school and school goals

These group attributes were displayed after the school experienced the fire and had to be relocated to a different area which created a shift in their culture and community support system. Strong-group characteristics in the school culture such as unity, commitment, allegiance, and teamwork all worked in harmony to preserve and perpetuate Wilson Academy High School and the core values the school embodies.

The Cultural Assessment Tool survey (Harris, 2015) classified Wilson Academy High School as a weak-grid, strong-group environment characteristic of the collectivist quadrant in Douglas's cultural typology. Interviews, observations, and document analysis also reinforced this classification. Figure 5.11 depicts Wilson Academy as a collectivist school culture based on the responses of six teachers and counselors in the school.

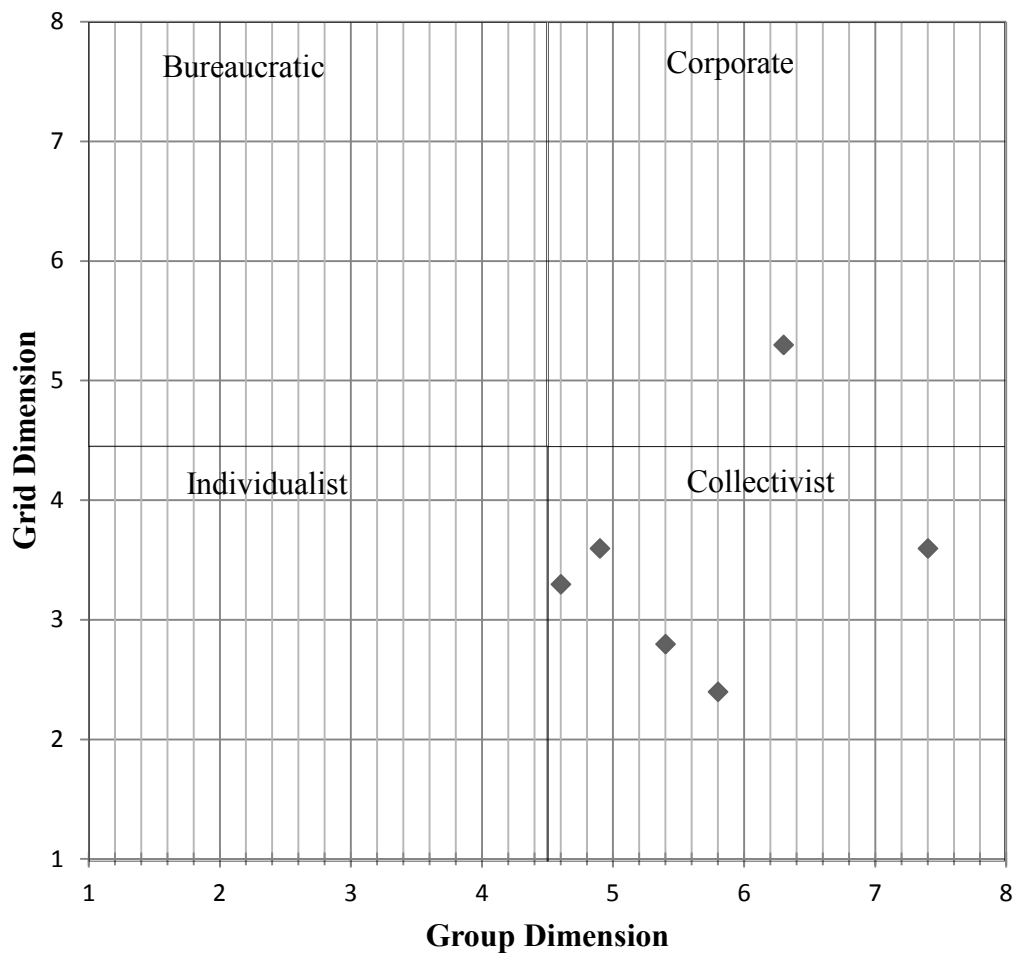


Figure 5.11: Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) Responses for Wilson Academy High School: Collectivist

Responses to the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) ranged from a minimum value of one to a maximum value of eight. Twelve questions addressed the grid dimension of the school, and 12

questions addressed the group dimension of the school. For each respondent, an average score was generated for both dimensions, representing an ordered pair (Xgrid, Ygroup). These values were then interpreted through Douglas's cultural typology and identified in one of the four cultural prototypes- bureaucratic, corporate, collectivist, or individualist.

Weak-grid dimension of Wilson Academy. Survey data revealed that Wilson Academy High School as a weak-grid culture. Five of the 6 respondents classified the grid dimension of the school as weak. The weakest ranked grid items addressed individual teacher autonomy and student ownership of their education. Figure 5.12 shows the two weakest ranked grid items for Wilson Academy High School (See Appendix E). Characteristic of a weak-grid environment, 5 out of 6 Wilson respondents indicated they had full autonomy in selecting instructional strategies. With minimal rules governing the environment student autonomy was also specified as a priority at the site. The strongest ranked grid items addressed specialized roles and how teachers obtain instructional resources. Figure 5.13 shows the strongest ranked grid items for Wilson Academy High School (See Appendix E).

Although Wilson Academy High School was classified as a weak-grid environment, the strongest ranked grid items, specialized roles and teacher resource allocation are indicative of a strong-grid culture. This may be explained by the way school is conducted in general. In most school environments teachers have specialized roles and instructional resources are generated by the school budget which is allocated and managed by the principal. Despite these two strong-grid rankings, 5 out of the 6 respondents classified Wilson as a weak-grid environment.

The mean of the grid items for Wilson Academy High School was 4.52. Responses ranged from 2.17 to 5.67. The significant difference in grid responses reflected varying perspectives of the grid characteristics embedded in Wilson's culture; however, grid data revealed all but one respondent

classified the grid dimension of the school culture as weak. Despite a large dispersion of values in the grid data, as a collective whole, teachers perceived their school environment as a weak-grid culture.

Strong-group dimension of Wilson Academy. Survey data reflected Wilson Academy High School as a strong-group culture. Six out of 6 respondents identified the group dynamic as strong. The strongest ranked group items concerned allegiance/loyalty to the school and decisions made by consensus or group approval. Figure 5.14 shows the two strongest ranked group items for Wilson Academy (See Appendix E). Consistent with a strong-group culture, loyalty and allegiance to the school and shared decision-making reflected the strongest group rankings for Wilson Academy High School. This data coupled with the weak-grid characterization supports the collectivist classification of Wilson's school culture. Figure 5.15 shows the weakest ranked group items for Wilson Academy High School (See Appendix E). Verifying the strong-group culture at Wilson, all respondents confirmed rules and procedures were few/implicit.

The mean of the group items was 5.71. Group scores ranged from 3.5 to 7.5. Group data indicated diverse perspectives existed among staff regarding components of the group dynamic of the school culture. Despite these sizable margins, all respondents indicated strong-group characteristics were embedded in the environment and therefore was classified as a strong-group environment.

Summary

Using the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015), Hudson High School was classified as a strong-grid, strong-group environment consistent with Douglas's Corporate prototype (1982). The two strongest ranked grid items among respondents regarded hiring decisions and member roles. The weakest ranked grid item among respondents regarded students taking ownership of their education. In addition, Hudson High School was identified as a strong-group environment. The two strongest ranked

group items concerned allegiance/loyalty to the school and clear responsibilities for teachers and administrators with much accountability. The weakest ranked group item concerned extrinsic reward beneficiaries. Overall, 11 of the 23 Hudson respondents classified their school culture as corporate, five classified their school culture as collectivist, four classified their school culture as bureaucratic, and three classified their school culture as individualistic.

Using the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015), Brown High School was classified as a strong-grid, weak-group culture demonstrative of a bureaucratic school environment according to Douglas's cultural typology (1982). Five of the six respondents ranked the grid element of the school as strong. Hierarchical authority structures and centralized hiring decisions were the strongest ranked grid items. The weakest ranked grid item addressed students taking ownership of their education. Regarding the weak-group association of Brown, five of the six respondents classified the group dynamic as weak. The weakest ranked group item concerned the socialization and work activities of educators. The strongest ranked group items addressed allegiance/loyalty to the school and clear responsibilities for teachers and administrators with much accountability. Overall, five respondents classified Brown as a bureaucratic school culture and one respondent classified the environment as a collectivist school culture.

The Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) classified Wilson Academy High School as a weak-grid, strong-group environment characteristic of the collectivist quadrant in Douglas's cultural typology. Five of the six respondents classified the grid dimension of the school as weak. The weakest ranked grid items addressed individual teacher autonomy and student ownership of their education. The strongest ranked grid items addressed specialized roles and how teachers obtain instructional resources. Five of the six respondents classified Wilson as a weak-grid environment. Additionally, survey data reflected Wilson Academy High School as a strong-group culture. Six of the six respondents identified

the group dynamic as strong. The strongest ranked group items concerned allegiance/loyalty to the school and decisions made by consensus or group approval. The weakest ranked group item confirmed rules and procedures were few/implicit. All respondents indicated strong-group characteristics were embedded in the environment and therefore was classified as a strong-group environment.

Cultural Preference Survey

Participant Demographics

Three principals, three assistant principals, three deans, and one executive director completed the Cultural Preference Tool survey (Harris, 2015), for a total of 10 responses.

Gender. Five males and five females completed the survey. Table 5.1 displays a gender comparison of the participant demographic responses.

Table 5.1	
<i>Gender Comparison of Participant Demographic Responses</i>	
Male	Female
40% of males were over the age of 41	80% of females were over the age of 41
20% of males taught for 17 years or more	40% of females taught for 17 years or more
80% of males have been in their current position for 1-5 years	80% of females have been in their current position for 1-5 years
0% of males have more than a master's degree	40% of females have more than a master's degree
80% of males have aspirations to advance	80% of females have aspirations to advance
60% of males preferred weak-grid environments 40% preferred strong-grid	60% of females preferred weak-grid environments 40% preferred strong-grid
60% of males preferred Collectivist culture 40% preferred Corporate culture	60% of females preferred Collectivist culture 40% preferred Corporate culture
Table 5.1	

Race. Eight participants were Caucasian and 2 were African American. The African American male in the study preferred a weak-grid environment, while the African American female preferred a strong-grid environment. Both African American participants preferred strong-group environments along with all other participants in the study. The African American male in this study preferred a collectivist culture while the African American female preferred a corporate cultural environment.

Age. Two participants were between the ages 25-32, two participants were between the ages of 33-40, three were between 41-48 years of age, and three were between the ages of 49-56. In the category of age, the majority of females were over the age of 41 while the majority of males were under the age of 41. Moreover, 40% of females taught for more than 17 years compared to 20% of males. When viewed together, this information indicates females are teaching longer than males before entering administration. All principals in the study were over 41 years of age. This finding suggests attaining a principalship may be more likely after 41 years of age.

Teacher experience. Two participants spent 1-4 years as teachers, three spent 5-8 years as teachers, one taught for 9-12 years, one taught for 13-16 years, and three taught for more than seventeen years. Regarding gender and teaching experience, 40% of females taught for more than 17 years compared to 20% of males. This information indicates females may be teaching longer than males before entering administration.

Number of years in current position. One participant had been in their current position for less than a year and nine participants had been in their positions for 1-5 years. Eighty percent of males and 80% of females spent 1-5 years in their current positions. The principal from the bureaucratic environment had been in her position for less than one year. The assistant principal from the

bureaucratic environment had been there less than three years. The principal from the corporate environment had been in his current position for less than four years. One assistant principal and one dean from the corporate environment had been in their current positions for less than five years, while the other assistant principal and the two other deans had been in their current positions for less than two years. The principal and the executive director from the collectivist environment had been in their positions for less than four years and the dean had been in his current position for two years. All participants had been in their positions for less than five years.

Educational attainment. In terms of educational attainment, 40% of females attained either a master's degree plus 60 hours or are working at the doctoral level. Conversely, none of males in the study attained more than a master's degree. Both female principals were working at the doctoral level while the remaining male principal had a master's degree.

Aspirations to advance. Four of the five females and four of the five males had aspirations to advance. All participants indicated they had aspirations to advance except two principals.

Grid cultural preference. Overall, six participants preferred weak-grid environments while four participants preferred strong-grid environments. Sixty percent of males and 60% of females preferred weak-grid environments. Forty percent of males and 40% of females preferred strong-grid environments. The majority of principals preferred strong-grid environments, while the majority of assistant principals and deans preferred weak-grid environments. Of the six respondents preferring weak-grid environments, one is a principal, two are assistant principals, two are deans, and one is an executive director. Of the four participants preferring strong-grid environments, two are principals, one is an assistant principal, and one is a dean.

Group cultural preference. All males and females preferred a strong-group culture.

Cultural preference. Sixty percent of males and 60% of females prefer collectivist culture while 40% of males and 40% of females prefer corporate culture.

Cultural Preference Tool Analysis

Grid Preference

The strongest preferred grid item for all respondents addressed specialized roles and teachers obtaining instructional resources through administrative allotment. Figure 5.15 (See Appendix F) shows the strongest preferred grid items among participants.

Two out of three principals preferred strong-grid environments, conversely, 2 of the 3 assistant principals preferred weak-grid cultures and 2 of the 3 deans preferred weak-grid environments. The strongest preferred grid item among 9 of the 10 participants was environments where teachers obtain resources through administrative allotment. Only one participant ranked this grid item as neutral. In addition, 7 of the 10 participants indicated a preference for role specialization within their jobs. Only one respondent ranked specialized roles below neutrality.

Figure 5.16 shown in Appendix F depicts the strongest preferred grid items among administrators. These results indicate administrators preferred specialized roles and a system where instructional resources are delegated to teachers by administrators. The latter of the grid preferences revealed a minimal variance among participants; 9 of the 10 administrators showed strong-grid preference.

The weakest preferred grid items among administrators addressed autonomy in selecting instructional strategies and students encouraged to take ownership of their own education. Figure 5.17 (See Appendix F) reflects the weakest preferred grid items for all respondents. The weakest preferred

grid items reflected administrators preferred an environment where individual teachers have autonomy in selecting instructional strategies.

Group Preference

The strongest preferred group items reflected members working collaboratively toward goals and allegiance/loyalty to the school. Figure 5.18 (see Appendix F) shows the strongest preferred group items for administrators. All administrators preferred to work in environments where there is much allegiance/loyalty to the school. Eight of the 10 respondents ranked this indicator at eight, the highest value permitted on the survey.

The weakest preferred group items among administrators concerned educators' socialization and work activities and how teacher performance is evaluated. Figure 5.19 (See Appendix F) shows the weakest preferred group items among all respondents.

The majority of administrators preferred an environment where educators' socialization and work are incorporated activities; however, the variance for this preference was 4.32. This showed a diverse preference existed among participants regarding socialization and work activities. Moreover, when administrators were asked about evaluating teacher performance, the concentration of rankings was from 3 to 5, revealing an insignificant preferential bias toward evaluating teachers according to individual or group goals. This was evidenced by the 4.30 mean score of the survey item.

Cultural Environment Preference

Results showed six participants preferred to work in a collectivist environment; four participants preferred to work in a corporate environment. Table 5.2 shows the cultural context preference of participants by position.

Table 5.2			
<i>Cultural Context Preference Comparison by Position</i>			
Position	Corporate Preference	Bureaucratic Preference	Collectivist Preference
Principal- Corporate	X		
Assistant Principal- Corporate	X		
Assistant Principal- Corporate			X
Dean- Corporate	X		
Dean- Corporate			X
Principal- Bureaucratic	X		
Assistant Principal- Bureaucratic			X
Principal- Collectivist			X
Executive Director- Collectivist			X
Dean- Collectivist			X
Table 5.2			

Of the six participants preferring collectivist environments, three worked at the collectivist high school in this study. One of the six was an assistant principal who worked at the corporate high school in this study, and one was a dean at the corporate high school.

Of the four respondents preferring corporate environments, one was the principal at the corporate high school in this study, and one was the principal at the bureaucratic environment in this study. One assistant principal and one dean worked at the corporate high school in this study and represented the other two respondents who preferred to work in a corporate setting. Six of the 10 respondents worked in the cultural environment they preferred.

Summary

Three principals, three assistant principals, three deans, and one executive director completed the Cultural Preference Tool survey (Harris, 2015), for a total of 10 responses. The following themes emerged when analyzing participant demographics in this study: (1) the female participants taught longer than the male participants before entering administration; (2) the females participants had more educational attainment in the administrative field than their male counterparts; (3) attaining a principalship was more likely after 41 years of age for participants; (4) the female participants entered administration at an older age than the male participants; (5) administrative participants did not remain in administrative positions for more than five years; and (6) participants who preferred strong-grid environments advanced to principalships more often than those who preferred weak-grid environments.

In terms of the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015), six participants preferred weak-grid environments; four participants preferred strong-grid environments. Of the six respondents preferring weak-grid environments, one was a principal, two were assistant principals, two were deans, and one was an executive director. Of the four participants preferring strong-grid environments, two were principals, one was an assistant principal, and one was a dean. The majority of principals preferred strong-grid environments, while the majority of assistant principals and deans preferred weak-grid environments.

Concerning grid preference, the strongest preferred grid item for all respondents addressed specialized roles and teachers obtaining instructional resources through administrative allotment. These results indicated administrators preferred specialized roles and a system where instructional resources are delegated to teachers by administrators. The weakest preferred grid items among administrators

addressed autonomy in selecting instructional strategies and students encouraged to take ownership of their education.

Overall, all participants preferred a strong-group environment. The strongest preferred group items reflected members working collaboratively toward goals and allegiance/loyalty to the school. The weakest preferred group items among administrators concerned educators' socialization and work activities and how teacher performance is evaluated.

Results showed six participants preferred to work in a collectivist environment while four participants preferred to work in a corporate environment. Six out of 10 respondents worked in the cultural environment they preferred.

Information presented and analyzed in this chapter was collected through interviews, observations, surveys, school websites, documents, and school tours. This information was analyzed through the lens of Grid and Group Theory as supported by Douglas (1982) and Harris (2015). Through analysis of the three school environments, similarities and differences emerged regarding the manifestation of cultural elements at each specific site. Chapter VI presents results of the study in the context of the research questions anchoring the study. Implications for research, theory, and practice are addressed and recommendations for further study are offered.

CHAPTER VI

SUMMARY, FINDINGS, CONCLUSIONS, AND IMPLICATIONS

In Oklahoma, achieving principal licensure requires a master's degree, two successful years of classroom teaching, and passing pertinent principal certification tests. When one considers the entry most educators commonly utilize, placement and advancement should seem inevitable. Many times this is not the case. Some individuals do not advance or individuals progress through an atypical career pathway.

One reason for the difference in career advancement among educators is the culture of the school environment (Deal & Kennedy, 1982; Grant, 2008; Hancock, 2012; Harris, 2005, 2015; Ingersoll & May, 2011; Morgan 2006; Schein, 2000). Context and culture are relationally symbiotic in school settings; therefore, a school's culture could manifest cultural conditions that hinder or promote advancement (Harris, 2005, 2015). In this study, the cultural context of each school was found to play a role in the advancement of educators. The grid and group make-up of each school was interpreted through Douglas's (1970, 1982) Cultural Framework and were identified as the following: Hudson High School (Corporate), Brown High School (Bureaucratic), and Wilson Academy High School (Collectivist). Figure 6.1 illustrates these representations.

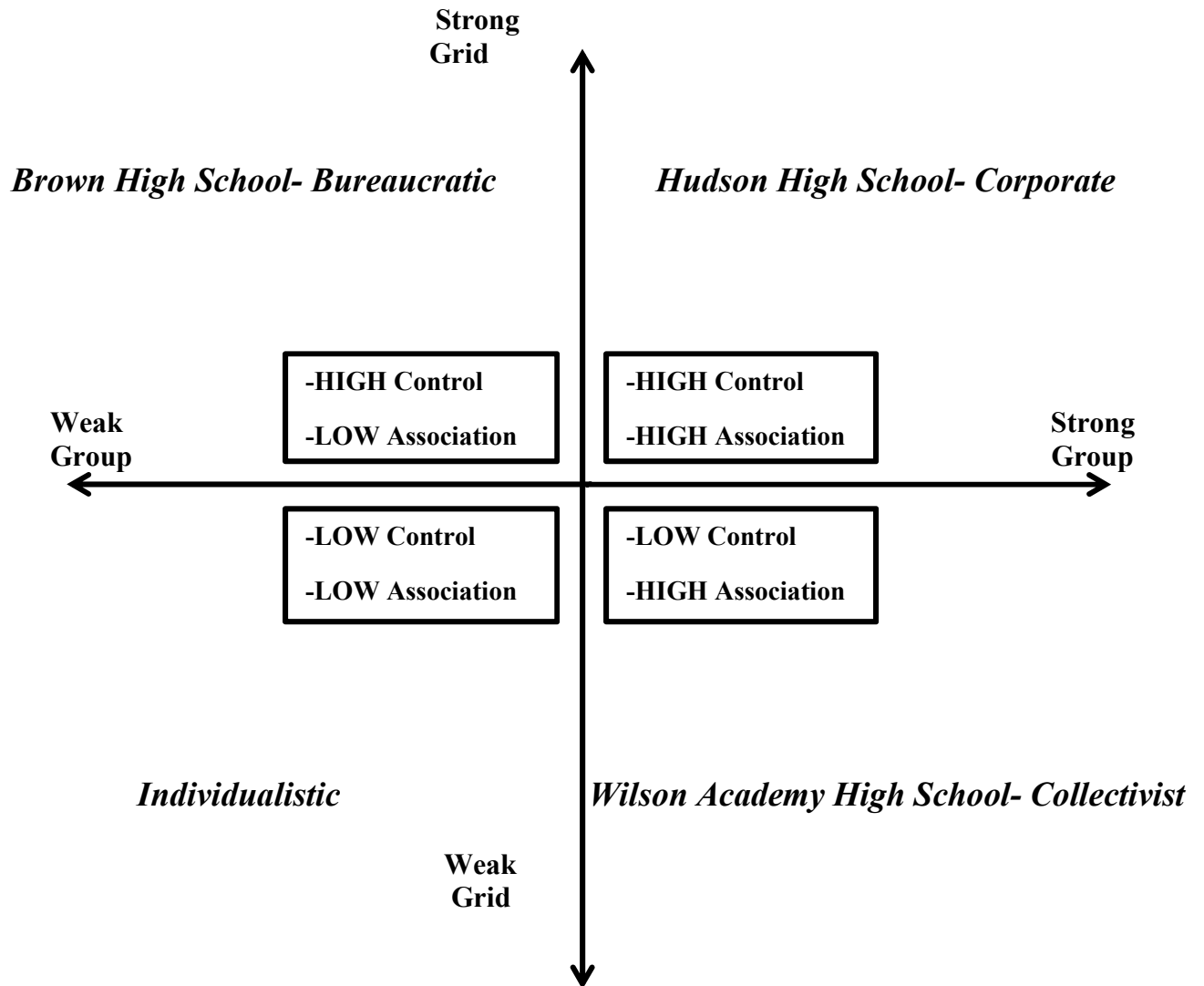


Figure 6.1: Identification of case studies: Hudson High School (Corporate), Brown High School (Bureaucratic), and Wilson Academy High School (Collectivist).

Data were collected over a period of six months using surveys, interviews, observations, and documents. Triangulation methods were used to analyze data (Erlandson et al., 1993). Chapter IV included a detailed description of each of the three cases selected for this study. Hudson High School, Brown High School, and Wilson Academy High School are described using thick, rich language and details in order to present each case study in both historical and current perspectives. To determine how the cultural context of the school promotes and inhibits the career advancement of educators, principals, assistant principals, deans, teachers, parents, and one executive director were interviewed. Analysis of the data was presented in Chapter V using Douglas's (1982) Typology as a framework. Application of the grid and group theoretical framework occurred after data was collected and provided a filter through which all data was analyzed.

Findings

The purpose of this study was to explore the connection between school culture and career advancement at the three selected high schools. The following research questions anchored this study:

- 1) How did the cultural context of the three selected schools promote and inhibit the advancement of educators?
- 2) What role, if any, did cultural preference play in career advancement?
- 3) How did educators adapt or align their advancement efforts according to their school's distinct cultural environment?
- 4) What other findings relative to the research purpose existed outside of the grid and group framework?

Based on the case studies presented in Chapter IV and the data analyzed in Chapter V, these research questions are answered in the following section.

Research Question One: How did the cultural context of the three selected schools promote and inhibit the advancement of educators?

Corporate Environment of Hudson High School

In the corporate context, hierarchy is the social game lever that can hinder or promote career advancement. Due to the nature of the corporate context, internal career advancement opportunities may exist for those willing to “climb the ladder” (Harris, 2015). However, the strong-grid, strong-group designation of the corporate context can alternately offer little administrative turnover and therefore positions in the upper echelons of the hierarchy are scarce. This research revealed several ways the corporate environment promoted and inhibited the advancement of educators.

Promotes Advancement

Internal advancement. Ms. Howard, a dean at Hudson discussed how internal advancement opportunities propelled her advancement at the site, “...I think what’s helped me to move along in that process would be my administrator giving me the opportunity to have those experiences and to grow professionally...this year I have taken on the role of attendance dean...” As she described, this environment provided her the opportunity to become an attendance dean at the site while still teaching two classes.

Another example of internal advancement was relayed by Mr. Oak, a teacher who moved to a dean at the site, “I think being in the same place for 19 years...I’ve kinda [sic] worked my way through the school...been offered different positions....”

Professional development. Professional development and opportunities for teachers to lead professional development was also identified as a way Hudson supported the advancement of educators.

Mr. Doss, the principal explained how teachers showing competency in their roles could leverage opportunities to lead professional development and be identified as teacher-leaders, “We chose some select teachers that we felt were strong in the classroom...we try to create opportunities for teachers to grow professionally.” As Mr. Doss described, model teachers were selected and professional development took the form of “...watching a model teacher...learning from the best....”

One of these model teachers, Ms. Howard, shed light on the professional development initiative from the teacher perspective, “...my evaluator...observed me using a strategy and then I would teach or model that for other teachers...my administrator knew that I was looking to advance and that I needed that...experience.”

Teachers-as-leaders. Ms. Howard confirmed building teacher capacity through professional development was a direct result of her advancement at Hudson, “...and I became a teacher-leader and modeled instructional strategies for other teachers...um lead some PLCs...I was identified because I was a teacher-leader.”

Mentors. Findings from this research discovered mentors played a key role in the advancement of educators at Hudson. Ms. White, an assistant principal discussed how mentors helped her advance, “...the teacher to dean um was because of my first principal’s encouragement...from dean to assistant principal, I had a principal that...knew...I had the ability to be an assistant principal....” Ms. Howard described a similar mentorship experience, “...when my principal moved over to Hudson High School he brought me along with him...this year I have transitioned into attendance dean and algebra teacher.”

Acknowledging the significance of mentors, Mr. Doss embraced this lever through professional learning, “...learning from mentors is a very powerful professional development tool...create opportunities for teachers to grow professionally.”

Networking. Networking in conjunction with district supports was also described as a perceived proponent of advancement. This theme was uncovered when Mr. Ellis and Ms. Green were asked what they have done to try and advance to a higher position in the district. Ms. Green relayed her efforts, “I’ve tried to do some networking with...people that I have worked with before that are in principal positions at other schools...” Mr. Ellis also described that “being part of the assistant principal leadership group” and “talking to my principal and other assistant principals about things, getting ideas from them on how to solve issues...” was an invaluable experience.

Horizontal movement within role. Although Hudson promoted advancement through vertical opportunities, horizontal advancement opportunities within roles was also discussed by participants. Ms. White reflected on her career advancement experiences, “I think um within my assistant principalship...I am advancing and learning new things...I have gone from just disciplinarian to...curriculum...it’s not my favorite thing but it definitely has broadened my marketability.” As Ms. White suggested, horizontal movement within her assistant principal role makes her a more marketable candidate for advancement. Mr. Doss, the principal also suggested his marketability was improved because of movement within his role, “...I did put on different hats as assistant principal...gave me an opportunity to uh broaden my horizons in different aspects of the school....”

“Corporate mind-set.” Results from this study showed having a “corporate mind-set” promoted advancement at Hudson. For the purposes of this study, a “corporate mindset” is characterized by an understanding that the principal is the ultimate authority at the site and internal advancement to this position would not be likely and therefore, administrators are content in supporting this position rather than advancing to it. Advancement within educator’s current role is as important as moving into the principal role. Loyalty to the school and the group provides the paradigm in which the mindset rests. Ms. White depicted this mindset during her interview, “Do I want to be a building principal? Not

really...so I would much rather be an assistant to a very good principal than principal...I couldn't do it any better...."

Inhibits Advancement

Results of this study found the corporate context has the ability to inhibit the career advancement of educators in a variety of ways.

Hierarchy. This study confirmed Harris's notion that corporate contexts inhibit advancement as a result of little administrative turnover in the upper echelons of the hierarchy. Ms. White, moved from dean to assistant principal at the site commented on this phenomenon, "I did one year as a dean then moved to AP [assistant principal], I haven't advanced since then." She goes on to discuss her intentions for advancement which is facilitated by her strong allegiance to the group and school she belongs to, "Do I want to be a building principal? Not really...would I go out of the district for a higher position? Yes, um but I'm not actively pursuing that because I actually love my job here and I like what I do." In this interview exchange, Ms. White brought up several inhibitors to advancement characteristic of corporate environments. Moreover, positions in the upper echelons of corporate hierarchy are scarce so advancement after obtaining certain positions may be challenging. The principal Mr. Doss confirmed this notion, "I am very satisfied and happy in this position and have no desire to move onto an assistant superintendency or superintendency." Therefore, advancing into the upper echelons may require moving to a different school and cultural context. This is difficult for members of a corporation because of their loyalty and allegiance to the group.

Financial. As Ms. White mentioned, she loves her job and does not want to leave her current position but according to her she will have to eventually in order to make more money to provide for her family, "...I can't stay an assistant principal for the rest of my life and be able to provide for my family

and my children in college.” Consequently, hierarchy dictates salaries; therefore, being an assistant principal in a corporate environment offers not only stagnant advancement opportunities but stagnant salaries as well. Conversely, Mr. Oak, a dean at Hudson High School who was a teacher for 19 years before becoming a dean would receive a decrease in pay if he advanced to an assistant principal position, “It’s not beneficial for me to go from dean to assistant principal because I would probably receive a pay cut.” This phenomenon can be explained by the way assistant principals and deans are funded. According to Ms. White, all assistant principals begin at the same starting salary despite years of experience or educational attainment. Deans are funded as a teacher with a stipend. Their salaries take into account years of experience and educational attainment. Deans can also receive stipends for extra duties while assistant principals cannot. Therefore, advancement can be stimulated as a result of financial need for assistant principals or advancement can be hindered as a result of financial need for deans.

Retirement. Another inhibitor to advancement in the corporate context was demonstrated by Mr. Doss the principal of Hudson High School as he discussed his aspirations for career advancement, “My personal goal has never been at the central office, so at this point in my career, after 30 years, I reached my personal goal of high school or building-level principal.” As Mr. Doss discussed, he intends to remain the principal of Hudson High School until he retires. This supports the idea that movement at the top of the corporate hierarchy is rare. In addition, advancement would necessitate more schooling and require him to leave the school. This dialogue uncovered retirement or how many years the principal plans to work before he or she retires could inhibit advancement. With the rare movement associated with top positions in the corporation, retirement could be a key inhibitor to advancement in the corporate context. On the other hand, as Ms. White revealed, retirement could promote her advancement, “There is one position I would like and that’s the district athletic department...the current District Athletic

Director doesn't plan on working a whole lot longer, when he retires, the assistants will move up which will leave the job open for me."

Gender bias and racial discrimination. During our interview, Ms. White exposed two other challenges she faced "climbing the ladder" at Hudson High School-- gender bias and racial discrimination.

My principal fought to move me from dean to AP [assistant principal]; there was...can I just say race? There was an African American male that um the service center wanted to put in this building...so that man was hired instead of me but that man ended up getting a job somewhere else so the job became open again...and they [service center] backed down and let him promote me to AP.

District influence on advancement process. This description of Ms. White's career advancement experiences revealed one of the limitations of this study- the district influence on the advancement process. This influence became an emerging theme during interviews that I labeled "district obstacles." Ms. Howard described the district process for educators wanting to advance in the district, "...reminds me of "Top Model" where you're eliminated at every round. I don't feel like the "Top Model" experience gives me any skills or adds anything to my ability..." Ms. Green, another dean at Hudson High School went through the same district process. "Yes, I want to be an AP [assistant principal], I went through the interview process and did well but there were no AP jobs available so I took this dean job." Ms. Green's logic uncovered a caveat in the advancement process regardless of cultural context- district officials placing administration at school sites without input from the principal. This process can interrupt the cultural elements embedded in the corporate environment that would naturally foster advancement such as strong-group affiliation and conversely inhibit internal advancement opportunities

as Ms. White recognized, “My principal fought to move me from dean to AP [assistant principal]; he went to the service center and asked for me but he had to settle for someone else first.”

Finally, Ms. White discussed district obstacles to advancement for assistant principals who are “doing the work” in schools and feel the “Leadership Selection Academy” is just another “hoop to jump through.” According to White, “I think it’s really hard in our district to advance...too many hoops to jump through...If I can’t be promoted because of my merits...I don’t know if I want to go to a higher position in this district.”

Bureaucratic Environment of Brown High School

The social game lever embedded within the environment is authoritarianism, which supports hierarchical power structures, clearly defined rules and roles, and an autocratic style of leadership (Harris, 2015). Due to the authoritarianism social game embedded within the culture, positional power is displayed on a distinct chain of authoritarian command. With this power resides responsibility and ownership of their school site. The bureaucratic mode tends to support horizontal movement of administrator to administrator across schools rather than vertical movement of teachers to administrators within schools. Thus, this type of environment has the ability to impede or support career advancement. In the bureaucratic environment, power is based on hierarchical distribution of roles and responsibilities. This distinct chain of command creates limited opportunity for career advancement within the school environment. Principals perceived as incompetent would most likely be replaced through horizontal movement from school to school, rather than vertical movements from within schools.

Promotes Advancement

Results from this study found the bureaucratic environment can promote the advancement of educators in three distinct ways:

Technical qualifications, expertise, and competence. First, technical qualifications, expertise, and competence in a current administrative role assisted in the horizontal advancement of educators. This process was described by Ms. Richards, the assistant principal at Brown High School, “Professional development has helped me...when I applied to an AP position, Brown High School wanted somebody strong in curriculum and academics so I just naturally fit the bill....” Ms. Richards advanced horizontally from a district curriculum writing position to assistant principal at Brown. As she explained, she attributes her advancement to her qualifications and expertise, “...getting out there and diversifying and learning as much as you can about your craft...being prepared educationally has helped me [advance].”

Individual attributes. Ms. Anderson, the principal at Brown discussed how her individual attributes helped her advance, “...being the person that hands-down got it [principal of Brown High School]... Considering this was a national search, 88 candidates, I have what they felt they needed to take this place to a new level.” Findings in this study support the notion that in a bureaucratic environment, opportunities for advancement exist for members possessing individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background. For instance, Brown High School has only had two white principals since its inception; therefore, the district was looking for administrators with the specific race attribute of black or African American which may have been one of the reasons the search for Brown’s next principal was a national search.

“Bureaucratic mind-set.” This study also found the bureaucratic environment helps promote individuals with a “bureaucratic mind-set.” For the purposes of this research, “bureaucratic mind-set” is characterized by authoritarian leadership style, willingness to advance horizontally from school to school, possessing a competitive nature, and reliance upon individual qualifications and attributes to advance in an organization. Ms. Anderson displayed this mind-set throughout the interview. One

instance was when she discussed what helped her advance, “I also think the thing that helped me was leaving [the district] and leaving what you know and get new learning helps prepare you with different perspectives as well.” This supports the idea that she was willing to leave a particular school in order to gain expertise and experience to be able to compete for upper level positions. Consequently, this mind-set facilitates loyalty to positions and roles instead of particular schools or cultural contexts. When Ms. Anderson was asked about her aspirations for career advancement, she confirmed this principle, “...so I guess for me it’s trying to funnel, do I keep my skills and talents at Brown High School or do I try to do what’s best for the greater good and I haven’t got an answer yet.” With Ms. Anderson in her first year as principal of Brown, loyalty to the position or potential position appears to drive her advancement aspirations rather than loyalty to the school.

Inhibits Advancement

Findings from this research revealed the bureaucratic context has the capacity to inhibit the advancement of educators in several ways.

Horizontal advancement. One inhibitor to advancement was expressed by both interview participants from Brown High School-- the horizontal movement from administrator to administrator across schools rather than vertical movement from teacher to administrator within schools (Harris, 2015). Ms. Anderson, the principal, exemplified this characteristic as she discussed her journey from teacher to principal.

When I left here [the district] I was a teacher and when I went to Texas I went in as a teacher for a year and then I took the dean position and then after the dean position, I was able to get an assistant principal position for three years and after being an assistant principal, I was able to get my own building.

As a teacher, Principal Anderson felt she needed to leave the school district in order to advance and gain experience, “I also think the thing that helped me [advance] was leaving the district...” This discussion illuminated the idea that Ms. Anderson did not perceive internal advancement as an option. After she left the district she returned five years later to pursue the principalship at Brown High School. This description of a national search to replace the retiring principal at Brown showed the bureaucratic nature of the environment and the reliance on horizontal movement of administrators from school to school rather than vertical movement from teacher to administrator within schools. Supporting this idea Ms. Richards, the assistant principal, moved from the service center to the assistant principal position at Brown High School.

I taught for 20 years...became the curriculum specialist for the district...ended up writing curriculum for the district for a year and that's when I said I need to be somewhere else so I applied to be an assistant principal and [Brown] was looking for somebody....

Both Ms. Anderson and Ms. Richards were placed at Brown via horizontal movement. This can inhibit the advancement of educators working within this type of environment.

Chain of command. In the bureaucratic environment, power is based on hierarchical distribution of roles and responsibilities. This distinct chain of command creates limited opportunity for career advancement within the school environment. Moreover, when few leadership roles and opportunities are available within the school, vertical movement even within the upper echelons of the hierarchy is rare as Ms. Richards notes, “...when my former principal was here, I was in charge of professional development.” As the new principal, Ms. Anderson took control of the professional development of the school. Indicative of the bureaucratic environment, she displayed positional power based on a distinct chain of authoritarian command. Leveraging this power, she regained responsibility and ownership of

the school site. One of these responsibilities was the professional development of the staff, “This year we’ve kind of shifted our professional thinking hats in that we made it relevant and consistent throughout the year with what the needs were in our building....”

Authoritarian leadership. Regaining power over professional development supported the notion Ms. Anderson governs the school with an autocratic style of leadership. This type of leadership characteristic of a bureaucratic environment provides teachers, deans, and assistant principals little opportunity to lead or compete for advancement due to the explicit roles and responsibilities each member fulfills.

Weak-group culture. Another inhibitor to advancement revealed in this study was the weak-group dynamic prevalent at Brown High School. More specifically, weak affiliation for the school displayed by Ms. Anderson throughout the interview was present. Although in her first-year as principal, she expressed uncertainty when asked about her aspirations for career advancement.

I don’t know...um, I’m kind of at a cross-road...I have apprehensions leaving the classroom or leaving the building...but at the same time I think I could do very well especially at this district...so I guess for me it’s trying to funnel, do I keep my skills and talents at Brown High School or do I try to do best for the greater good and I haven’t got an answer yet.

Describing the bureaucratic quadrant of her typology, Douglas (1970) noted this environment “...has strong-grid controls, without any group membership to sustain individuals” (p. 6). Ms. Anderson supported this statement when she described being at a “cross-road” during her first year as principal with regard to her aspirations for career advancement. Being a product of horizontal movement from school to school rather than within the school cultivated less commitment and allegiance to the group.

Individual attributes. Horizontal movement can promote advancement for administrators at other schools showing competency or possessing specific individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background the school or district desires. Conversely, horizontal movement can inhibit the advancement of educators showing competency within the school environment or administrators who do not possess the desired attributes such as race gender, and/or background. One example of this bureaucratic element can be seen when Ms. Richards described her horizontal movement from writing curriculum for the district to assistant principal at Brown.

I have a natural drive to learn more so even when I was content being an English teacher for the rest of my life, I mean every professional development opportunity...I did National Board...I was an AP Reader for 7 years...did...state test reviews. It [professional development] has helped me before to get to this position...when I applied to be an assistant principal, [Brown High School] wanted somebody strong in curriculum and academics and so I just naturally filled that bill....

As Ms. Richards discussed, the district was looking for an assistant principal for Brown High School with specific technical expertise in curriculum and academics and she “naturally fit the bill.” Both of these examples depict how horizontal movement can inhibit advancement for educators within the school and for educators based on individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background.

Collectivist Environment of Wilson Academy High School

The collectivist environment promotes unity, distributive leadership, collaboration, competition, and group-preservation. According to Harris (2015), opportunities for internal advancement exist for individuals showing capacity to lead and accomplish group goals. On the contrary, career advancement can be obstructed for administrators or educators coming from outside of the collectivist environment.

Promotes Advancement

Results from this study indicated the collectivist context promotes the career advancement of educators in a variety of ways.

Internal advancement. All administrative participants at Wilson Academy High School described internal advancement opportunities as a promoter to their advancement. Ms. Ward discussed her advancement experiences at Wilson: "...because I worked here at the time, the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role." The Executive Director, Mr. Ross conveyed a similar advancement experience at the site, "I was band director and then I became a principal here. While I was a band director, I was finishing up my Master's, so for one year I was a principal and then I became Executive Director." As Mr. Ross explained, this type of environment almost exclusively selects members within the environment to advance. At Wilson, the rejection of authoritarian leadership and hierarchy was apparent in Mr. Ross's and Ms. Ward's account of their advancement experiences. Accordingly, Ms. Ward was able to advance from teacher to principal, and Mr. Ross was able to advance from teacher to principal to Executive Director substantiates the notion that the collectivist context promotes career advancement through internal advancement opportunities.

The dean at Wilson Academy verified this idea when he described his advancement experiences, "I have always thought I would transition into administration...started this process after conversations with administration here about my future."

Mentor/Mentorship. Another way the collectivist context was found to promote advancement was through mentors or mentorships. This was evidenced by Mr. Ross, the Executive director's account of how he came to his career.

I started off as a band director...I felt like there was going to be some opportunities for me to move up...at the time we only had a single director...director and principal role was all one person and so that person retired suddenly...they hired an interim director...he then hired me as principal...he basically groomed me to take over as Executive Director...the next year we started talking to Ms. Ward about moving into the principal role and then this is our 4th year, Ms. Ward and I, she's the principal and I'm the Executive Director.

This dialogue emphasized the central role mentoring played in the career advancement of Mr. Ross and Ms. Ward at Wilson. In Ms. Ward's interview she also expressed how important this mentorship was to her advancement, "...the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role following Mr. Ross...I have a great relationship with Mr. Ross, he and I are a phenomenal team...I wouldn't be able to it without that really close relationship...."

"Collectivist mind-set." This study also discovered having a "collectivist mind-set" helped promote educators in this environment. For the purposes of this study, the "collectivist mind-set" represents a culture of learning, building teacher capacity and efficacy, and willingness to compete for internal advancement opportunities. This mind-set was evident when Mr. Scott the dean at Wilson described what he thought helped him advance, "The whole of the administrative staff at Wilson is currently pursuing avenues of further education in their respective fields...so that culture of achievement really resonated with me and truly raised the bar in terms of my expectations of my own development." He continued this theme when he was asked about his career aspirations, "I certainly do, Wilson, at least among administrators, has cultivated a progressive culture where further education is the status quo." In both of these accounts, a culture of learning and willingness to compete are indicated as components of advancement in this environment. Mr. Ross, the Executive Director, also detailed how the "collectivist-mind-set" helped him advance.

I think a lot of administrators like order...a school like ours where we let teachers have a lot of autonomy...a lot of administrators couldn't handle that...I want to say, "this is how things are done" and I want everyone else to say, "ok, thank you." This is not a school where you could do that...This is where you say, "Hey there's a problem, let's all work together," then you have a lot of conversation, a lot of back and forth, and 98% of the time I'm good with that- that is what has helped here for me to be successful.

The principal, Ms. Ward, also attributed elements of her success to this distinct mind-set.

When I have taught at big districts you might know one or two parents so there's a piece of that that resonates with me...there's times I think it would be nice to have a really big ship but then I think, can you scale a mountain that big? I don't know if that would be a good fit for me...My interest is very human and one of the little gifts from this small place is this is a community you can wrap yourself around-- 300 students and 25 teachers-- you can know everyone by name and something of their life story.

Mistrust of outsiders. According to Harris (2015), the mistrust of outsiders is a key component of a collectivist school environment. This component facilitated advancement for all the interview participants at Wilson Academy in two distinct ways- exclusive internal advancement opportunities for members and building leadership capacity in members through internal professional development opportunities. Ms. Ward supported both assertions throughout her interview.

...so I really went into the program [Master's in School Administration] not knowing if I would really want to be a principal or administrator...I can't tell you how many times when I was doing my coursework that I would leave in tears thinking that's the last thing I want to do...however, in the midst of that there still was this thread of relationship and community and making a

difference and that was the piece that I think continued to lure me...as it turned out...the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role...it really was this natural but kind of wandering; intentional in an accidental kind of way.

This depiction of the principal's advancement experience at Wilson bolstered the notion that opportunities to advance were offered exclusively to members of the collectivist context even if those members did not hold the qualifications to advance or were uncertain they wanted to advance. The Executive Director voiced similar experiences.

I felt like there was going to be some opportunities for me to move up...didn't really have any formal uh plans on how to move people into administration...I knew there were going to be...some options there so I went back and got my master's and while I was getting my Master's...he [interim director] hired me as the principal while I was finishing my Master's um and then he was basically grooming me to take over as Executive Director the next year.

Affirming the principal and Executive Director's accounts, the dean described his advancement experiences, "I am graduating with my master's degree in May...This process was started in 2013 after many conversations with administration here about my future and potential strengths as an administrator." As all three participants conveyed, they were offered exclusive opportunities to advance while they were completing their required education and certifications to hold the position.

Role competence. Competition and role competence was also noted as a way the collectivist context promoted advancement. Ms. Ward expanded on her competence, "I know that I could if I wanted to throw my hat in the ring and probably land a big high school job someplace, I know I have the skills and ability to do that but that doesn't interest me."

Strong-group culture. The strong-group dynamic of Wilson Academy also played a role in the advancement of educators according to Mr. Doss, "...this is where you say, "hey here's a problem, let's all work together," and then you have a lot of conversation, and then you have a lot of back and forth..." As he described teacher voice and shared decision-making is a foundational piece of Wilson's culture. Ms. Ward confirmed the strong-group element present in educational levers such as professional development at the site, "...small groups, very informal...opportunity for information...basis for engagement, complicated conversations...the teachers own questions, own explorations could kind of guide...professional development."

Teacher voice, opportunities to lead, and the mistrust of outsiders, all compounded in this environment to propel internal advancement. Ms. Ward was an example of this, "...because I worked here at the time...I was able to step into a principal role." The Executive Director, Mr. Ross had a similar advancement experience, "I was band director and then I became a principal here." As demonstrated throughout the interviews, this type of environment almost exclusively selects members within the environment for advancement opportunities. This dynamic was only possible through a strong-group culture.

Inhibits Advancement

Results of this study showed the Collectivist Environment inhibits career advancement in several distinct ways.

Limited number of upper-level positions. One theme specific to charter schools discussed by the Executive Director and the principal, was the limited number of administrative positions available in this type of school. Mr. Ross discussed this limitation, "I work directly with the board so in this position [Executive Director] that's as far as it goes." Ms. Ward also mentioned the lack of available positions

found in this environment, “The only higher position is Eric’s job [Executive Director] and I don’t have my sights set on that.”

Internal advancement. Although internal advancement was found to be an advancement promotor, it also has the capacity to inhibit advancement according to Ms. Ward. She explained this dichotomy when she described her internal advancement from teacher to principal at Wilson Academy.

...it is challenging to be a teacher and then become an administrator...when I stepped into that role my image was very much about shepherding...being a pilgrim alongside...a very companion-based leadership model...a facilitator and mentor...but what I realize is administration, um because I think the corporate business machine, factory model of that has a way of skewing the image of anyone in leadership...for me what I realize is, I thought I was doing this and realized even if I was doing this it was being interpreted from a different lens, the principal lens as opposed to the shepherd lens or a fellow pilgrim lens.

As Ms. Ward explained, internal advancement, a key component of the collectivist environment, can itself inhibit advancement once a leadership position has been obtained. Douglas (1970) described this phenomenon, “Preferring equality, such a group would be handicapped by problems of leadership, authority and decision-making” (p. 6). Ms. Ward continued to expound upon this idea throughout the interview.

...the nature of going from a peer to a supervisor changes interpersonal relationships and there is a real human loneliness. I don’t feel isolated but...I feel um solitary and I think there is a sudden difference in that you know things that others can’t know, you feel things that others can’t feel...My world is seeing the big picture and all the pieces that are working or not working, and there’s not necessarily a place to share that...one of the limitations of the cultural animosity

or perceived conflicts between charters and traditional public schools is that a larger community of peer principals is not available to me...I don't have access to that and so there's a real piece that I would say is loneliness that's different than what I feel inside the building...here I just feel like it's solitary...I miss the classroom; I miss teaching.

Accordingly, internal advancement in a collectivist environment can inhibit advancement and temper aspirations for advancement as a result of the natural separation that occurs between teachers and administration. In this study, Ms. Ward expressed this as a sense of loss she felt in relationships and community after her advancement. At Wilson Academy, this phenomenon was felt so strongly by Ms. Ward that she considered an alternate career pathway, "...so I don't have plans to leave this position but I don't have a sense that this is the place I would stay forever." Indicated as a major challenge, Ms. Ward discovered the attributes and values this environment fostered in her as a teacher isolated her as a principal. This phenomenon diminished her desire to advance in the administrative field and therefore surfaced as an obstacle to advancement. Table 6.1 presents a comparison of the three cultural contexts regarding advancement.

Table 6.1

Comparison of Three Contexts

Comparison of Three Contexts			
	Hudson High School Corporate	Brown High School Bureaucratic	Wilson Academy High School Collectivist
Promotes	Internal Advancement Professional Development Mentors/Mentorships Networking Horizontal Within Role “Corporate Mind-Set” Teachers-As-Leaders	Qualifications/Expertise/Competence Individual Attributes “Bureaucratic Mind-Set”	Internal Advancement Mistrust of Outsiders Mentors/Mentorships Role Competence Strong-Group Culture “Collectivist Mind-Set”
Inhibits	Hierarchy Financial Retirement Gender Bias Racial Discrimination District Influence	Horizontal Advancement Authoritarian Leadership Weak-Group Culture Individual Attributes	Internal Advancement Few Positions Available

Research Question Two: What role, if any, did cultural preference play in career advancement?

In this research there was no direct evidence that cultural preference played a role in career advancement; however, several linkages were found to support indirect relationships between the two ideas. Using the Cultural Preference Survey Tool (Harris, 2015), two of the three principals in the study preferred strong-grid environments. The one principal who did not prefer strong-grid culture worked in the weak-grid culture in this study. Both principals preferring strong-grid culture worked in strong-grid cultures. This information is significant when coupled with the “mind-set” themes uncovered in this study. Interview data revealed “corporate mind-set,” “collectivist mind-set,” and “bureaucratic mind-set.” were ingrained in each principal. Ms. Ward the principal from the collectivist environment displayed this mind-set, “...there’re times I think it will be nice to have a really big ship but then I think,

can you scale a mountain that big? I don't know if that would be a good fit for me...My interest is very human and one of the little gifts from this small place is this is a community you can wrap yourself around..." In this dialogue, Ms. Ward showed how cultural preference played a role in her career advancement. In addition, Mr. Ross, the executive director at the site deduced why cultural preference might play a role in career advancement.

...you have to know that like things are not always going to go the way you think they are going to go because you're going to talk to teachers about it and they're going to have their own ideas and they're going to do things and that's, that's actually a really good piece but a lot of administrators could not handle that. I think there's a lot of people who if they came to our school they would be like I just, I hate this.

As Mr. Ross explained, nuances of culture in specific environments and cultural preference play a central role in career advancement.

In terms of the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015), six participants preferred weak-grid environments while four participants preferred strong-grid environments. Of the six respondents preferring weak-grid environments, one was a principal, two were assistant principals, two were deans, and one was an executive director. Of the four participants preferring strong-grid environments, two were principals, one was an assistant principal, and one was a dean. The majority of principals preferred strong-grid environments, while the majority of assistant principals and deans preferred weak-grid environments.

Concerning grid preference, the strongest preferred grid item for all respondents addressed specialized roles and teachers obtaining instructional resources through administrative allotment. These results indicate administrators preferred specialized roles and a system where instructional resources are

delegated to teachers by administrators. The weakest preferred grid items among administrators addressed autonomy in selecting instructional strategies and students encouraged to take ownership of their education.

Overall, each participant preferred a strong-group environment. The strongest preferred group items reflected members working collaboratively toward goals and allegiance/loyalty to the school. The weakest preferred group items among administrators concerned educators' socialization and work activities and how teacher performance is evaluated.

Results showed six participants preferred to work in a collectivist environment while four participants preferred to work in a corporate environment. Six of the 10 respondents worked in the cultural environment they preferred.

Research Question Three: How did educators adapt or align their advancement efforts according to their school's distinct cultural environment?

Bureaucratic Environment of Brown High School

Results from this study determined there were three specific ways in which the participants in this study, working within the bureaucratic environment, adapted or aligned their advancement efforts according to their school's distinct cultural environment-- having a bureaucratic mind-set, competence in their role prior to advancement, and realizing the technical qualifications, race, gender, and background the school is seeking.

“Bureaucratic Mind-Set”

A “bureaucratic mind-set” is characterized by authoritarian leadership style, willingness to advance horizontally from school to school, possessing a competitive nature, and reliance upon

individual qualifications and attributes to advance in an organization. Ms. Anderson, the principal of Brown High School, recognized and adapted her advancement efforts for a position rather than a particular school. However, she exhibited the necessary mind-set to achieve the position, “I also think the thing that helped me was leaving [the district], and leaving what you know and get new learning helps prepare you with different perspectives as well.” This supports the idea that she was willing to leave a particular school in order to gain expertise and experience to be able to compete for higher positions. She left the school district as a teacher and returned with four years of administrative experience on her resume, qualifying her to compete for the principalship at Brown. Moreover, her willingness to move from school to school via horizontal movement shows how educators embracing this mind-set might advance more quickly in this type of environment. This idea was also confirmed by Ms. Richards, the assistant principal at Brown who advanced horizontally from teacher to curriculum writer to assistant principal. Enhancing this supposition, both Ms. Anderson and Ms. Richards were placed at Brown by a committee from the district.

Role Competence

Competency in their roles prior to their current positions was also declared by both participants as a way they aligned their advancement efforts to achieve their positions at Brown. Ms. Richards discussed this when asked about her career advancement experiences, “...at my school things just got to be too much so I left there and was asked to apply for the curriculum specialist position.” This exchange depicts how her role competence as a teacher propelled her to a district position. Similarly, Ms. Anderson described her experiences when she decided to leave the district, “In [Texas] I went in as a teacher then became dean, and then after dean, I was able to get an AP [assistant principal] position for three years.”

Role competence also encompassed the tools used to hone their competence and expertise in their respective areas. Ms. Richards utilized professional development as a way to align her advancement efforts to attain her current position, “Professional development has helped me...when I applied to an AP [assistant principal] position, Brown wanted somebody strong on curriculum and academics so I just naturally fit the bill...I think it’s just you know getting out there and diversifying and learning as much as you can about your craft.” Ms. Anderson concurred with Ms. Richards, “I also think the thing that helped me was leaving and leaving what you know and get new learning helps prepare you with different perspectives as well.”

Realization and Utilization of Technical Qualifications

This study also found a method educators can use to adapt and align career advancement efforts according to the bureaucratic environment was to acknowledge or realize the technical qualifications, race, gender, and/or background the school is seeking. This idea was explained by Ms. Richards, “Professional development has helped me get to this position...Brown High school wanted somebody strong in curriculum and academics so I just naturally fit the bill.” As she described, she attributes her advancement to this bureaucratic environment as a result of her qualifications and expertise.

Individual Attributes

Ms. Anderson, the principal discussed how her individual attributes helped her advance, “Considering this was a national search, 88 candidates, I have what they felt they needed to take this place to a new level.” Findings in this study supported the notion that in a bureaucratic environment, opportunities for advancement existed for members possessing individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background. This process was detailed by Ms. Richards, the assistant principal at Brown High School, “I think it’s just you know, getting out there and diversifying and learning as much as you can

about your craft...being prepared educationally has helped me [advance].” Moreover, Ms. Richards advanced horizontally from a district curriculum writer position to an assistant principal position at Brown. As she explained, she contributes her advancement to this bureaucratic environment to her qualifications and expertise.

Findings in this study supported the notion that in a bureaucratic environment, opportunities for advancement exist for members possessing individual attributes such as race, gender, and/or background. Moreover, Brown High School has had very few white principals since it began; therefore, realizing the district was looking for administrators with the specific race attribute of African American can help educators not possessing this qualification to focus on other bureaucratic environments in which their individual attributes qualify them for a certain position.

It should be noted both administrative participants were placed at Brown by a committee and therefore findings can only be applied to advancement efforts across positions not internal efforts of educators currently employed in the bureaucratic environment.

Collectivist Environment of Wilson Academy High School

This study revealed three strategies educators could use to align/adapt their advancement efforts according to their collectivist school culture-- having a “collectivist mind-set,” role competence, and strong-group affiliation.

“Collectivist Mind-Set”

For the purposes of this study, the “collectivist mind-set” represents a culture of learning, building teacher capacity and efficacy, and willingness to compete for internal advancement opportunities. All participants in the collectivist case study were currently pursuing higher education.

Mr. Scott described this phenomenon, “Wilson, at least among administrators has cultivated a progressive culture where further education is the status quo.” He connected this idea with advancement opportunities at the site, “The whole of the administrative staff here is currently pursuing avenues of further education...so that ‘culture of achievement’ truly raised the bar in terms of my expectations of my own development.” Mr. Scott recognized the importance of educational and personal growth in his pursuit to advance at Wilson. Another way educators can align their advancement efforts in the collectivist environment is by becoming a teacher-leader through internal competition. At Wilson, leading professional development was a key format to utilize for educators wanting to advance. Ms. Ward, the principal explained professional development at her site, “It is rare for us to bring someone in from the outside...everything happens organically...my mission is to grow our teachers and so when I see them being successful in the classroom...doing something innovative...I want to showcase that...so I try to create opportunities for them to show the other faculty.” Understanding this process, educators could leverage this process to advance in this environment.

Role Competence

Role competence was represented by Ms. Ward’s response to her career advancement aspirations, “I know that I could if I wanted to throw my hat in the ring and probably land a big high school job someplace, I know I have the skills and ability to do that but that doesn’t interest me.” This notion of role competence coupled with strong-group affiliation facilitates advancement for educators willing to compete in this environment.

Strong-Group Affiliation

According to Mr. Ross, the Executive Director, aligning himself with the nuances of his school environment helped him advance.

...a school like ours where we let teachers have a lot of autonomy...a lot of administrators couldn't handle that...I want to say, "This is how things are done" and I want everyone else [to say], "Ok, thank you." This is not a school where you could do that and that's ok. This is where you say, "Hey there's a problem, let's all work together," then you have a lot of conversation, a lot of back and forth, and 98% of the time I'm good with that-- that is what has helped here for me to be successful.

The principal, Ms. Ward, also attributed elements of her success with this alignment.

When I have taught at big districts you might know one or two parents so there's a piece of that that resonates with me...there's times I think it will be nice to have a really big ship but then I think, can you scale a mountain that big? I don't know if that would be a good fit for me...My interest is very human and one of the little gifts from this small place is this is a community you can wrap yourself around-- 300 students and 25 teachers-- you can know everyone by name and something of their life story...so I really went into the program [Master's in School Administration] not knowing if I would really want to be a principal or administrator...there still was this thread of relationship and community and making a difference and that was the piece that I think continued to lure me...the circumstances here changed and I was able to step into a principal role...

This dialogue shows the importance of being a part of the group at Wilson, rather than an outsider if seeking to advance in this context.

Corporate Environment of Hudson High School

This research discovered several ways educators working in a corporate environment could adapt/align their advancement efforts according to their cultural environment including having a

“corporate mind-set,” role competency, strong-group affiliation, taking on leadership roles, networking, and mentorships.

“Corporate Mind-Set”

A “corporate mind-set” is characterized by an understanding that the principal is the ultimate authority at the site and internal advancement to this position would not be likely and therefore, administrators are content in supporting this position rather than advancing to it. Advancement within current role is as important as moving into the principal role. Loyalty to the school and the group provides the paradigm in which the mindset rests. Ms. White reflected this mind-set when asked about her career aspirations, “Do I want to be a building principal? Not really...I would much rather be an assistant to a very good principal.” This mind-set seems to facilitate advancement in the corporate environment up until the principalship. This idea was explained by the principal sharing this same mind-set, “My personal goal has never been at the central office...I am very satisfied and happy in this position and have no desire to move onto an assistant superintendancy or superintendancy.”

Role Competency

Role competency was mentioned by both assistant principals at Hudson. According to Ms. White she moved from dean to assistant principal because of her competence as a dean, “I had a principal that um observed me every day as the dean and knew that I had the ability to be an assistant principal.” Mr. Ellis, another assistant principal discussed the reason for his advancement from dean to assistant principal, “I think what helped me advance...was...my effectiveness...in the areas of my classroom and then my effectiveness at being the dean...as a classroom teacher I had growth in test scores...as the dean there were certain indicators...suspensions went down...I just showed success in each role.”

Strong-Group Affiliation

Ms. Green and Ms. Howard, both deans at Hudson note how the strong-group culture helped them advance and grow in their roles. Ms. Howard discussed this process, “I get feedback here at this site. I can ask how I’m doing or if I need to improve and I feel like I get that response. That has been incredibly helpful.” Ms. Green concurred, “The majority of teaching staff and administrative staff has really helped me. They understand it’s a new job, helping me understand what I need to do better and what I am doing well.”

Leadership Roles

Taking on leadership roles was also found as a way educators adapted/aligned their advancement efforts according to the corporate environment. Ms. Howard, a dean at Hudson discussed the importance of taking on leadership roles “This year I have taken on the role of attendance dean...I’ve learned quite a bit from my experience this year.”

Professional development and opportunities for teachers to lead professional development was also identified as a way Hudson supported the advancement of educators. Mr. Doss explained how teachers showing competency in their roles could leverage opportunities to lead professional development and be identified as teacher-leaders.

This year we have done...a professional development experiment...we chose some select teachers that we felt were strong in the classroom...so I think professional development is something hopefully we can um create a spark or interest for teachers to have that desire to improve...in their career by watching a model teacher, someone that is an accomplished educator...learning from the best...learning from mentors is a very powerful professional development tool...we try to um create uh opportunities for teachers to grow professionally.

Ms. Howard confirmed this strategy was a direct result of her advancement at Hudson, "...and I became a teacher-leader and modeled instructional strategies for other teachers...um lead some PLCs...but I think I was identified because I was a teacher-leader."

Networking

Networking in conjunction with district supports was described by Mr. Ellis and Ms. Green as a strategy that helped them advance. It is important to note that both participants were placed at Hudson and did not advance via internal advancement. As they describe, networking took place outside of the corporate environment. Ms. Green described her networking efforts, "...I was in the [Leadership Selection Academy]...I went through all of the principal steps and was successful, there just weren't any positions available and so that's why I took this position partly..." Mr. Ellis also described networking and district support as facilitators to his advancement.

...the way I am trying to advance is trying to learn as much as possible...so being part of the assistant principal leadership group that they have here [the district], always talking to my principal and other assistant principals about things, getting ideas from them on how to solve issues...

Mentorships

Ms. Howard a dean at Hudson described how mentorships helped her advance, "...my administrator knew that I was looking to advance and that I needed that mentor and the experience." Ms. White an assistant principal at Hudson also mentioned the role mentorships played in her advancement, "The teacher to dean um was because of my first principal's encouragement. He saw something in me...he thought...I should go into administration...from dean to assistant principal, I had

a principal that...knew that I um I had the ability to be an assistant principal...he wanted me for an assistant principal based on what he saw me do every day.”

Table 6.2 presents different ways educators adapted advancement efforts across contexts.

Table 6.2			
<i>How Educators Adapt Advancement Efforts Across Contexts</i>			
How Educators Adapt Advancement Efforts Across Contexts			
Adapt/Align	Hudson High School Corporate	Brown High School Bureaucratic	Wilson Academy High School Collectivist
	“Corporate Mind-Set” Role Competence Strong-Group Affiliation Leadership Roles Networking Mentors/Mentorships	“Bureaucratic Mind-Set” Role Competence Technical Qualifications Individual Attributes	“Collectivist Mind-Set” Role Competence Strong-Group Affiliation

Research Question Four: What other findings relative to the research purpose existed outside of the grid and group framework?

One factor that was found to exist outside the grid and group framework was the district influence on the advancement process. Under the same umbrella- district officials placing administration at school sites without input from the principal. Another finding existing outside the scope of grid and group was the funding formula the district used to pay administrators and the influence this had on career advancement.

Financial

As Ms. White mentioned, she loves her job and does not want to advance or leave her current position but she will have to eventually in order to make more money to provide for her family. Consequently, hierarchy dictates salaries and therefore being an assistant principal in a corporate

environment offers not only stagnant advancement opportunities but stagnant salaries as well.

Conversely, Mr. Oak, a dean at Hudson High School who was a teacher for 19 years before becoming a dean would receive a decrease in pay if he advanced to an assistant principal position. This phenomenon can be explained by the way assistant principals and deans are funded. According to Ms. White, all assistant principals begin at the same starting salary despite years of experience or educational attainment. Deans are funded as a teacher with a stipend. Their salaries take into account years of experience and educational attainment. Deans can also receive stipends for extra duties while assistant principals cannot receive stipends for extra duties. Therefore, advancement can be stimulated as a result of financial need for assistant principals or advancement can be hindered as a result of financial need for deans.

Retirement

Principal retirement was another theme existing outside the grid and group framework. Mr. Doss the principal of Hudson High School demonstrated this theme, “My personal goal has never been at the central office...I reached my personal goal of high school...principal. I am very satisfied and happy in this position and have no desire to move.” As Mr. Doss discussed, he intends to remain the principal of Hudson High School until he retires. This supports the idea that movement at the top of the corporate hierarchy is rare. In addition, advancement would necessitate more schooling and require him to leave the school. This dialogue uncovered retirement or how many years the principal plans to work before he or she retires could inhibit advancement. With the rare movement associated with top positions in the corporation, retirement could be a key inhibitor to advancement in the corporate context. On the other hand, as Ms. White revealed below, retirement could promote her advancement to the district athletic department.

There is one position I would like in the district and that's the district athletic department...I do know that the current District Athletic Director doesn't plan on working a whole lot longer, when he retires, the assistants will move up which will leave the job open for me.

Gender Bias and Racial Discrimination

During our interview, Ms. White exposed two other challenges she faced "climbing the ladder" at Hudson High School- gender bias and racial discrimination.

My principal fought to move me from dean to AP, he went to the service center and asked for me but he had to settle for someone else first. There was...can I just say race? There was an African American male that um the service center wanted to put in this building...the principal wasn't thrilled, but his hands were tied. So that man was hired instead of me.

District Influence on Advancement Process

This description of Ms. White's career advancement experiences revealed one of the limitations of this study- the district influence on the advancement process. This influence became an emerging theme during interviews that I labeled "district obstacles." Ms. Howard described the district process for educators wanting to advance in the district.

Some things I have done to try and advance in the district would be applying to our district and the 5 steps that requires...reminds me of "Top Model" where you're eliminated at every round. I don't feel like the "Top Model" experience gives me any skills or adds anything to my ability. Do I feel like they're able to assess what I know and what I don't know? Yes...but does it really help? No. I gain experience but I don't get feedback so I don't know if I did something adequate or I need to improve.

Ms. Green, another dean at Hudson High School went through the district's "Leadership Selection Academy" the previous year. "Yes, I want to be an AP [assistant principal], I went through the interview process and did well but there were no AP jobs available so I took this dean job." Ms. Green's logic uncovered a caveat in the advancement process in schools that are part of a large district, despite their cultural context- district officials placing administration at school sites without input from the principal.

As Ms. White discussed, this process can interrupt the cultural elements embedded in the corporate environment that would naturally foster advancement such as strong group affiliation and mistrust of outsiders and conversely inhibit internal advancement opportunities. Finally, Ms. White discussed district obstacles to advancement for assistant principals who are "doing the work" in schools and feel the "Leadership Selection Academy" is just another "hoop to jump through."

I think it's really hard in our district to advance...too many hoops to jump through. I don't want to play that game. I don't think I should have to create a fake PowerPoint or a fake PDP when I do that every day...If I can't be promoted because of my merits and my people that observe me and the people that work for me, I don't know if I want to go to a higher position in this district.

Additional factors found to exist outside of the grid and group framework supported other research findings and is discussed below.

- This study found barriers obstructing the career mobility of women were gender discrimination, biased organizational structures, and the cultural environment (Astin & Leland; Hamilton, 2009; Hancock, 2012; Grant, 2008).
- Results of this study corroborated that mentors and social networks were factors contributing to career advancement in educational leadership (Anderson, 2011; Cabrera & Thomas-Hunt, 2007; Dean, 2010; Forret & Dougherty, 2004; Kirchmeyer, 2005).

Conclusions

The findings in this study showed different cultural environments promote and inhibit career advancement related to their distinct cultural context. The three cases studied delivered three different cultural contexts. Hudson High school was a Corporate culture (strong-grid, strong-group); Brown High School was a Bureaucratic culture (strong-grid, weak-group); and Wilson Academy High School was a Collectivist culture (weak-grid, strong-group).

The findings indicated specific patterns in how each cultural environment, viewed through the lens of grid and group theory (Douglas, 1970), promotes and inhibits career advancement. All participants in the study indicated: (a) specific ways their school culture promotes and inhibits advancement; (b) individual attributes and preferences in school settings influenced advancement; (c) nuances of contextual culture across schools were present; (d) culture affects advancement within specific school cultures; and (e) advancement efforts varied across grid and group associations. These findings support previous research (Boettger, 1997; Barnes, 1997; Coc, 2013; Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; Kautz, 2008; Limwudhikraijirath, 2009; Murer, 2002; Purvis, 1998; Smith, 2009; Spitzer, 2009; Waelateh, 2009; White, 2013).

Results of this study found, Douglas's Typology was useful in describing, comparing, and explaining school culture in terms of grid and group for all three schools in this study. Each school represented characteristics consistent with a Bureaucratic, Corporate, and Collectivist school environment. An individualist school was not represented in the study. Findings reinforced the idea that distinct patterns and behaviors were associated with distinct school culture defined through the grid and group quadrants. These findings supported previous research conducted on the contextual culture of school settings (Diel, 1998; Ellis, 2006; White, 2013).

Similar to past research, grid and group theory was found useful in understanding and describing individuals and individual preference (Kautz, 2008; Purvis, 1998; Waelateh, 2009). Although this research did not explore approaches to teaching and learning, it explored the connection between cultural preference and career advancement for school administrators. Consistent with Purvis (1998), this study found no association between race and cultural preference or gender and cultural preference. Contrary to research conducted by Purvis (1998), school-level affiliation and individual preference was not addressed in this study.

In terms of grid preferences, a more significant pattern of preferential differences were indicated among principals. Of the three principals, 2 out of the 3 preferred strong-grid environments, while two out of three assistant principals preferred weak-grid environments. Additionally, 2 out of 3 deans preferred weak-grid environments. In terms of group preference, all administrative participants indicated strong-group preference. These findings suggest there is a pattern between individual preference and administrative positions. Further, individual grid and group preference was found to align with the cultural environment in which individuals worked. Moreover, all participants from the collectivist environment in this study preferred a collectivist school culture. Three of the six administrators working in the corporate environment preferred corporate culture. Contrary to this notion, the principal employed at the bureaucratic environment preferred corporate culture while the assistant principal from the bureaucratic site preferred collectivist culture. None of the participants preferred bureaucratic culture.

Consistent with previous research, this study found the grid and group framework useful in describing and explaining nuances of contextual culture across schools (Coc, 2013; White, 2013). This framework was used to understand and explain career advancement within a corporate, collectivist, and bureaucratic environment. Results of this study showed different promoters and obstructers to

advancement were indicative of each cultural environment. Further, similarities in advancement promoters and obstructers across school environments could be credited to grid and group dimensions embedded within each school culture. The differences in career advancement were attributed to “cultural mind-sets,” mentorship, professional development, leadership opportunities, networking, role competence, individual attributes, strong-group culture, weak-group culture, technical qualifications, leadership styles, mistrust of outsiders, district influence on the advancement process, gender bias, racial discrimination, financial motivations, and the number of available upper-level positions in a specific setting. Many of the inhibitors and promoters could be arranged into strong and weak grid and group silos present in all three cultures.

Implications

The findings from this study have implications for practice, research, and theory.

Practice

This study provided information about the connection between school culture and career advancement. This information is significant for educators, school leaders, district leaders, and university program faculty.

Educators. Educators can learn which cultural school environments are most conducive to advancement including internal advancement and external advancement. For instance, Collectivist culture was found to promote internal advancement while Bureaucratic culture was found to promote external advancement. In addition, corporate culture supports internal advancement however principals of Corporate schools rarely leave the school so top positions may be unavailable. If educators can identify through grid and group typology (Douglas, 1970) the cultural environment in which they

currently work or the cultural environment in which they want to work, they can learn from this study how to adapt or align their advancement efforts according to that distinct environment.

School leaders. School leaders can leverage the findings in this study in two significant ways—personal advancement efforts and understanding school culture. This study can help administrators in any capacity understand their cultural context in a more meaningful way; whether to advance in their specific environment or understand cultural elements in their specific environment in an effort to lead in a more effective way. In addition, understanding cultural preference and its relationship to advancement is important for a leader trying to advance or adapting their leadership styles to enhance their leadership capabilities. Ensuring a leader knows the cultural context in which they work and the key levers that make that specific environment work as a cohesive unit will ultimately affect the overall success of the school. Understanding context can also enhance stakeholder buy-in and communication and allow school leaders to leverage this process for the school as a whole.

District leaders. Today, school accountability is more important than ever for districts and district leaders. Specifically in large districts, instructional leadership directors and associate superintendents are held just as accountable for their cohort of schools as building principals. Understanding the cultural context of each school in their portfolio and aligning initiatives and programs accordingly will enhance the success of each initiative. Furthermore, district leaders need to understand how advancement happens in certain cultural contexts to ensure the most effective educators and teachers leaders are provided opportunities to lead despite the cultural environment they work in. In addition, understanding school leader's strengths and weaknesses through a cultural context lens will help place the most effective leader in the most appropriate cultural environment. For example, many large districts have teacher-leader programs for promising leadership candidates. Giving the Cultural Preference Survey (Harris, 2015) to candidates would help educators assess and identify their cultural

preference in order to align their preference with their advancement efforts. District leaders could then compile a list of candidate's preferences and match them with similar cultural school environments. Moreover, to understand career advancement in the context of culture, knowing what type of leader educators are, their cultural preference, and the cultural environment in which they work is important for the overall success of the leader, the school, and the district.

University program faculty. School administration programs at colleges and universities can utilize information in this study to understand career advancement in the context of culture. This knowledge can advise school leaders how to assess and identify their cultural preference and cultural context in which they work and navigate within that preference and context to align advancement efforts. This knowledge and action can ultimately affect the success of school administrators at any school site.

Research

The study of a school's cultural context and the role it plays in the promotion or hindrance of the career advancement of educators, defined here through the grid and group typology, is important because school administrators play a significant role in the success of schools. Studying the cultural conditions under which some educators were able to advance in their careers and some were not helped expand the cultural perspective typically applied in educational settings. This study confirmed findings from previous research regarding environmental promoters and obstructers of career advancement. Broadly, the findings of this study can be applied in a variety of organizational research settings in an effort to understand the role contextual culture plays in the career advancement of employees. Specifically, the results of this research provided a research model of cultural environments that are favorable and unfavorable to the career advancement of educators.

Using Douglas's (1982) grid and group framework for the study expanded the research base on school culture to include cultural context as a rationale for why some educators advance and others do not. The following recommendations for further study are offered as prospective extensions of this research.

- Research to include teacher-leaders aspiring to be administrators
- Research to include educators qualified to be administrators but failed to achieve an administrative position
- Research to include a broader scope of "cultural mind-sets" and their influence on career advancement
- Research to include the cultural assessment of the district involved in the study to understand the relationship between district cultural context and the career advancement of educators
- Research to include middle schools and elementary schools
- Research to include a comparison of like cultural environments to isolate similarities and differences in the career advancement of educators across contexts in the same grid and group quadrant

Theory

Douglas's (1982) grid and group typology was used to identify and describe the three schools in this study. When applied to school culture, the typology was found useful in explaining patterns of behavior and social interactions within an educational environment (Harris, 2005, 2015). This research contributed to the theory through the application of the framework to the career advancement which had not been done before. This study showed the usefulness of the theory in understanding the role school culture plays in the career advancement of educators. On the other hand, this research also showed the

limitations of the theory- realities existed beyond the framework that impacted career advancement in all three schools.

This study also uncovered a need for developing a new survey tool geared toward identifying the “cultural mind-set” of educators which would create a more complete picture of the educator in order to align advancement efforts according to their individual mind-set, specific cultural environment, and cultural preference. This type of assessment and reflection might combat administrator turnover and enhance school processes and overall success of the school and leader.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A

Letter of Permission for Access

Dr. Ballard
Superintendent
Tulsa Public Schools
3027 South New Haven Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74114

February 15, 2015

Dear Dr. Ballard:

In fulfillment of the research component required of students in Oklahoma State University's Doctorate of Education, I am seeking your permission to gain access to the staff of three to four school sites.

The purpose of this research is to explore the role school culture plays in the career advancement of educators. Grid and group typology consisting of four cultural environments including: bureaucratic, individualist, collectivist, and corporate will be used to classify each of the school sites. Once three to four sites have been identified, this study will explore what is present in each cultural setting that promotes or obstructs the advancement of educators. I would like to conduct research this spring 2015 that will involve interviewing three to four principals, three to four assistant principals, and three to four deans. The primary methods of data collection will be surveys, audio-taped interviews, observations, and public documentation. A copy of my Institutional Review Board application packet will be available for your review. If you require, I can also provide a copy of the entire research proposal.

Upon receiving approval of the Institutional Review Board, the study will commence in the spring of 2015. Data collection will extend throughout the spring semester. Any necessary follow-up interviews will be conducted to ensure credibility; member checks of the transcribed interviews will ensure accurate participant representation. Data gathering and analysis should be complete by May 2015.

If you are willing to allow me to proceed with this research, please indicate so with your signature below. If you require additional assurances, please contact me for further discussion.

Email address: groomre@tulsaschools.org Cell phone: 918.269.3034.

Sincerely,

Rebecca Grooms

Superintendent's Signature

APPENDIX B

Informed Consent

The Role of School Culture in the Career Advancement of Educators

Investigator: Rebecca Grooms, Ed.D. Candidate, Oklahoma State University

Purpose:

You are being invited to participate in a study on the role of school culture in the career advancement of educators. The purpose of this study is to, through the lens of Grid and Group Theory, explore how different cultural contexts either promote or inhibit the career advancement of educators.

Procedures:

As a participant in this study, you have been purposefully selected to participate in an interview, where you will be asked questions regarding your career advancement experiences. The interview should take approximately 20 minutes and will be conducted via phone, email, or face to face in the location of your choice. I will record the interview so that I can later transcribe the interview. I will provide a copy of the transcribed interview to you so that you can verify the accuracy and content of the interview.

Risks of Participation:

During the research study, you will be asked to provide information and/or discuss your opinion regarding the ways in which school culture either promotes or obstructs career advancement.

Benefits:

The results of this study will inform schools and districts regarding the types of environments most conducive to career advancement. In addition, this knowledge can be utilized by university programs,

school districts, administrators, and school personnel to better support the career advancement of educators through cultural aspects embedded within school environments.

Confidentiality:

Data collected during this study will be kept in a locked filing cabinet, accessible only to the researcher. Data will be stored for a year, and will then be shredded and destroyed. Interviews will be recorded, and the data will be transferred to a flash drive that will be stored in a locked filing cabinet. Pseudonyms will be assigned to all participants in the study, and there will be no way to link the data with names at any time. The records of this study will be kept private and confidential. Any written results will discuss overall findings of the study and will not include information that would identify you. Research records will be stored securely and only the researcher and individuals responsible for research oversight will have access to the records. It is possible that the consent process and data collection will be observed by research oversight staff responsible for safeguarding the rights and wellbeing of people who participate in research.

Compensation:

No compensation will be provided for participation in research.

Contacts:

If you have any questions about this study, please contact:

Rebecca Grooms
Ed.D. Candidate
3620 S. Indianapolis Ave.
Tulsa, OK 74135
(918)269-3034
groomre@tulsaschools.org

or

Dr. Ed Harris, Advisor
Oklahoma State University
College of Education
308 Willard Hall
Stillwater, OK 74078
(405)744-7932
ed.harris@okstate.edu

If you have questions about your rights as a research volunteer, you may contact:

IRB Chair contact info
219 Cordell North
Stillwater, OK 74078

(405)744-3377
irb@okstate.edu

Participant Rights:

Your participation in this study is voluntary, and you may choose to discontinue participation at any time with no risk or penalty.

Signatures:

I have read and fully understand the consent form. I sign it freely and voluntarily. A copy of this form has been given to me.

Signature of Participant

Date

I certify that I have personally explained this document before requesting that the participant sign it.

Signature of Researcher

Date

APPENDIX C

Interview Protocol

Interview Questions for School Administrators

- 1) Tell me about how you came to this career.
- 2) What are your favorite things about coming to work?
- 3) How does professional development happen here?
- 4) Tell me about your career advancement experiences.
- 5) What do you think helped you advance?
- 6) Tell me about your career pathway experiences.
- 7) Do you have aspirations for career advancement? Why or why not?
- 8) What are some things you have done to try to advance to a higher position in the district?
Are these efforts working? Why or why not?

APPENDIX D

Cultural Assessment Tool

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

Position (please check one)

- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Administrator
- ☐ Other

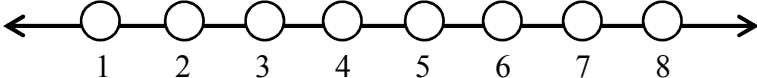
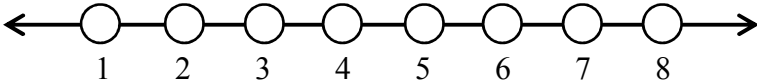
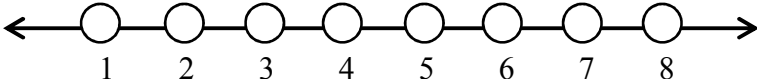
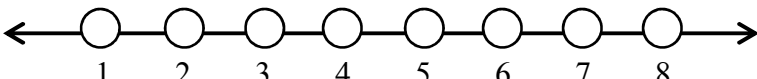
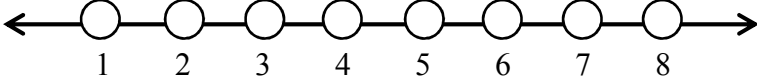
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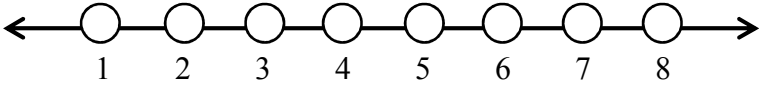
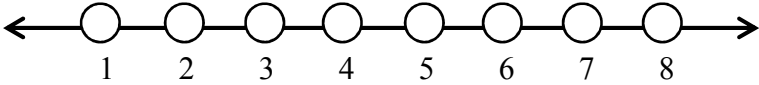
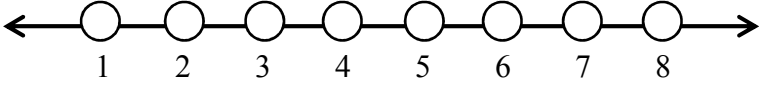
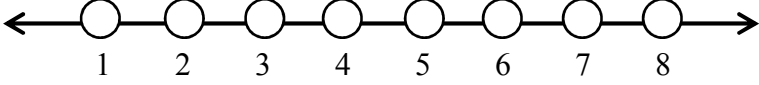
- ☐ School site (specify) _____

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

This survey contains 24 items each with a ranking from 1-8. Please choose only one bubble per item.

This bubble best represents the work atmosphere associated with your school site. In the statements below, the term administration refers to administration at any level including dean, assistant principal, or principal.

Item	Grid Consideration	Score
1	<p>Authority structures are:</p> <p>decentralized/ nonhierarchical</p> <p>centralized/ hierarchical</p> 	
2	<p>Roles are:</p> <p>nonspecialized/ no explicit job descriptions</p> <p>specialized/ explicit job descriptions</p> 	
3	<p>Individual teachers have:</p> <p>full autonomy in textbook selection</p> <p>no autonomy in textbook selection</p> 	
4	<p>Individual teachers have:</p> <p>full autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> <p>no autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> 	
5	<p>Individual teachers have:</p> <p>full autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> <p>no autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> 	

6	<p>Students are:</p> <p>encouraged to participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> <p>discouraged from participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> 	
7	<p>Teachers obtain instructional resources (technology, manipulatives, materials, tools) through:</p> <p>individual competition/negotiation</p> <p>administrative allotment/allocation</p> 	
8	<p>Instruction is:</p> <p>individualized/personalized for each student</p> <p>not individualized/personalized for each student</p> 	
9	<p>Individual teachers are motivated by:</p> <p>intrinsic/self-defined interests</p> <p>extrinsic/institutional rewards</p> 	

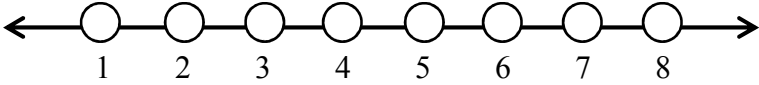
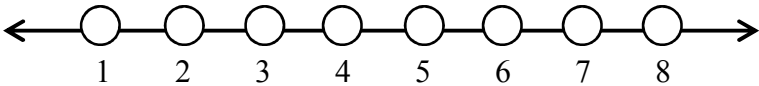
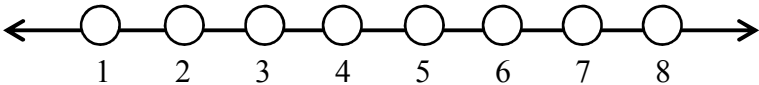
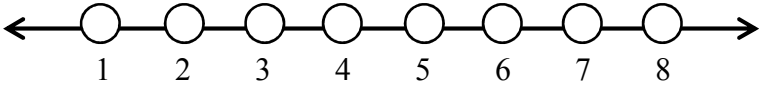
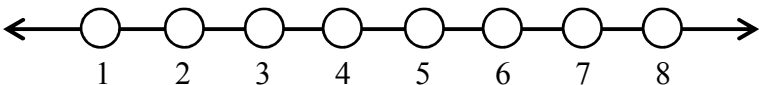
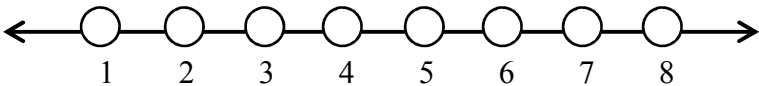
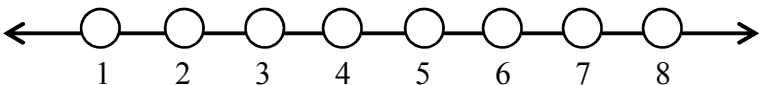
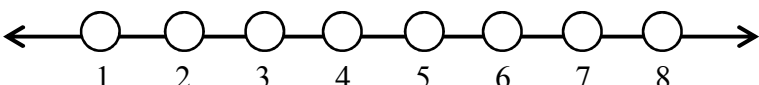
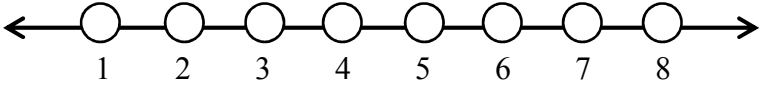
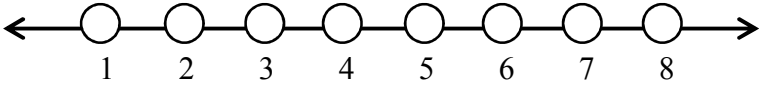
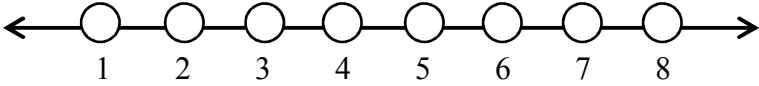
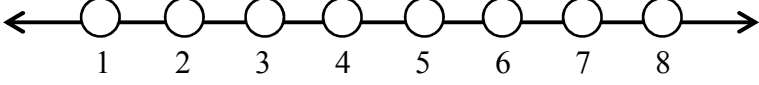
10	<p>Hiring decisions are:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>decentralized/ controlled by teachers</div> <div>centralized/ controlled by administrator(s)</div> </div> 	
11	<p>Master Schedules are determined through:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>Individual teacher negotiation</div> <div>institutional rules/ routines</div> </div> 	
12	<p>Rules and procedures are:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>few/implicit</div> <div>numerous/explicit</div> </div> 	
<p style="text-align: right;">Sum of grid scores: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Average of grid scores (sum/12): _____</p>		

Figure D.1. Cultural Assessment Items, Grid

Item	Group Consideration	Score
1	<p>Instructional activities are initiated/planned by:</p> <p>individual teachers working alone all educators working collaboratively</p> 	
2	<p>Educators' socialization and work are:</p> <p>separate/dichotomous activities incorporated/united activities</p> 	
3	<p>Extrinsic rewards primarily benefit:</p> <p>the individual everyone at the school site</p> 	
4	<p>Teaching and learning are planned/organized around:</p> <p>individual teacher goals/interests group goals/interests</p> 	
5	<p>Teaching performance is evaluated according to:</p> <p>individual teacher goals, priorities, and criteria group goals, priorities, and criteria</p> 	

6	<p>Members work:</p> <p>in isolation toward goals and objectives</p> <p>collaboratively toward goals and objectives</p> 	
7	<p>Curricular goals are generated:</p> <p>individually</p> <p>collaboratively</p> 	
8	<p>Communication flows primarily through:</p> <p>individual, informal networks</p> <p>corporate, formal networks</p> 	
9	<p>Instructional resources are controlled/owned:</p> <p>individually</p> <p>collaboratively</p> 	

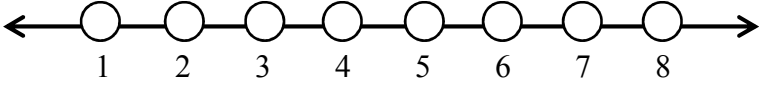
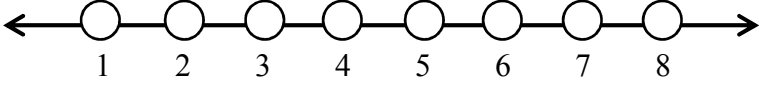
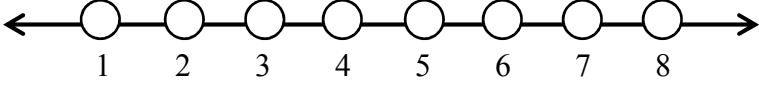
10	<p>Educators and students have:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>no allegiance/ loyalty to the school</div> <div>much allegiance loyalty to the school</div> </div> 	
11	<p>Responsibilities of teachers and administrators are:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>ambiguous/ fragmented with no accountability</div> <div>clear/communal with much accountability</div> </div> 	
12	<p>Most decisions are made:</p> <div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div>privately by factions or independent verdict</div> <div>corporatively by consensus or group approval</div> </div> 	
<p style="text-align: right;">Sum of grid scores: _____</p> <p style="text-align: right;">Average of grid scores (sum/12): _____</p>		

Figure D.2. Cultural Assessment Items, Group

APPENDIX E

Cultural Preference Assessment Tool

PRELIMINARY INFORMATION

(please check one)

Position: ☐ principal ☐ assistant principal ☐ dean

Gender: ☐ male ☐ female

Race: ☐ African American ☐ Caucasian ☐ Asian ☐ Native American ☐ Pacific Islander

Ethnicity: ☐ Hispanic ☐ not Hispanic

Age: ☐ 25-32 ☐ 33-40 ☐ 41-48 ☐ 49-56 ☐ 57-64 ☐ 65-72

Number of years as a teacher: ☐ 1-4 ☐ 5-8 ☐ 9-12 ☐ 13-16 ☐ 17 or more

Number of years in current position: ☐ less than 1 ☐ 1-5 ☐ 6-10 ☐ 11-15 ☐ 16 or more

Educational attainment: ☐ Bachelor's ☐ Master's ☐ Master's + 60 ☐ Doctoral

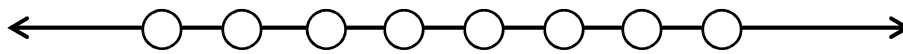
Do you have a Master's Degree in School Administration? ☐ yes ☐ no

Do you have aspirations to advance your career in school administration? ☐ yes ☐ no

Reflecting on my career advancement experiences from teacher to dean, the school environment in which I worked _____ my career advancement.

Promoted

Obstructed

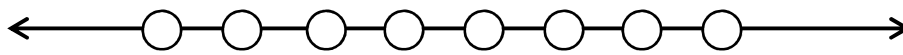


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Reflecting on my career advancement experiences from teacher to assistant principal, the school environment in which I worked _____ my career advancement.

Promoted

Obstructed

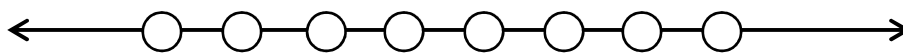


1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

Reflecting on my career advancement experiences from assistant principal to principal, the school environment in which I worked _____ my career advancement.

Promoted

Obstructed

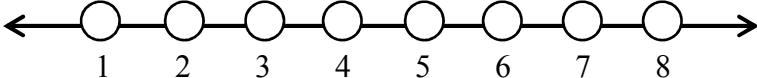
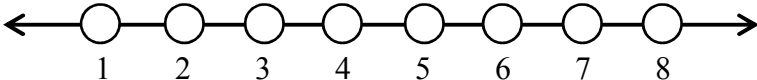
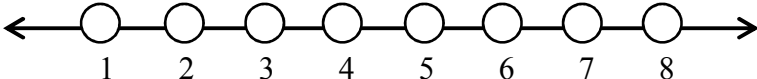
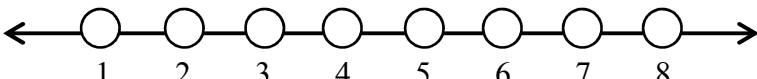
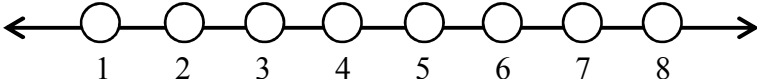


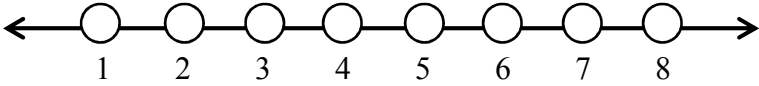
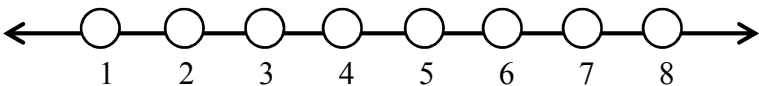
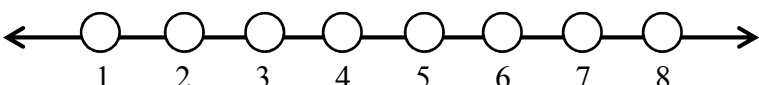
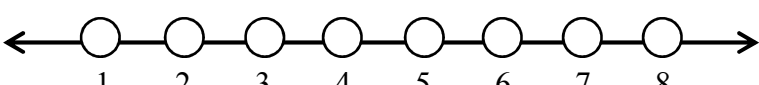
1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8

SURVEY INSTRUCTIONS

This survey contains 24 items each with a ranking from 1-8. Please choose only one bubble per item.

This bubble best represents your work environment preference and does not necessarily reflect the atmosphere in which you currently work.

Item	Grid Consideration	Score
1	<p>During my career advancement experiences authority structures were:</p> <p>decentralized/ nonhierarchical</p> <p>centralized/ hierarchical</p> 	
2	<p>During my career advancement experiences roles were:</p> <p>nonspecialized/ no explicit job descriptions</p> <p>specialized/ explicit job descriptions</p> 	
3	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in textbook selection</p> <p>no autonomy in textbook selection</p> 	
4	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> <p>no autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> 	
5	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> <p>no autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> 	

6	<p>During my career advancement experiences students were:</p> <p>encouraged to participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> <p>discouraged from participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> 	
7	<p>During my career advancement experiences Teachers obtained resources through:</p> <p>individual competition/ negotiation</p> <p>administrative allotment/ allocation</p> 	
8	<p>During my career advancement experiences Instruction was:</p> <p>individualized/ personalized for each student</p> <p>not individualized/ personalized for each student</p> 	
9	<p>During my career advancement experiences Individual teachers were motivated by:</p> <p>intrinsic/ self-defined interests</p> <p>extrinsic/ institutional rewards</p> 	

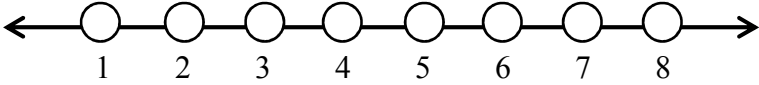
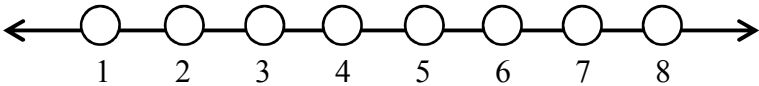
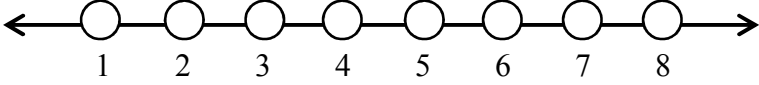
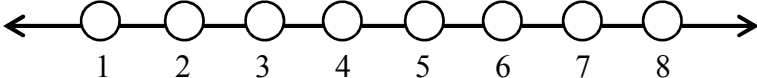
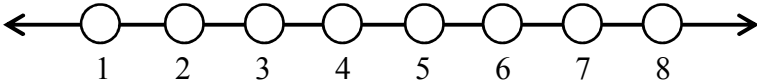
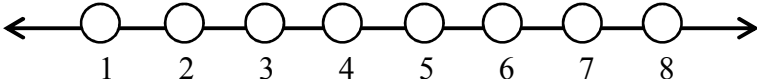
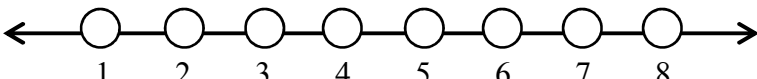
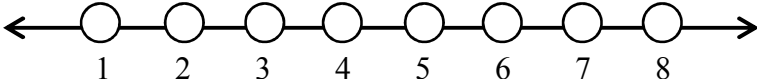
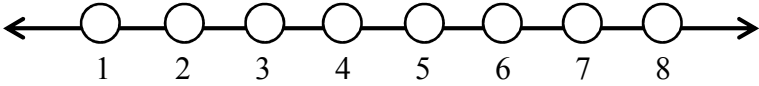
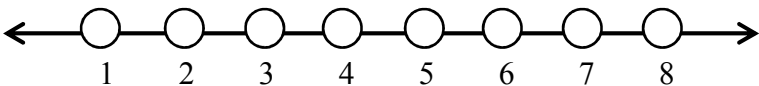
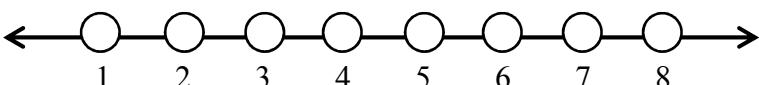
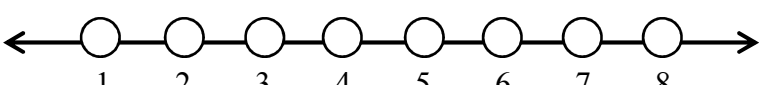
10	<p>During my career advancement experiences hiring decisions were:</p> <p>decentralized/ controlled by teachers</p> <p>centralized/ controlled by administrator(s)</p> 	
11	<p>During my career advancement experiences Master Schedules were determined through:</p> <p>Individual teacher negotiation</p> <p>institutional rules/ routines</p> 	
12	<p>During my career advancement experiences rules and procedures were:</p> <p>few/implicit</p> <p>numerous/explicit</p> 	
<p>Sum of grid scores: _____</p> <p>Average of grid scores (sum/12): _____</p>		

Figure E.1. Cultural Preference, Grid

Item	Grid Consideration	Score
1	<p>During my career advancement experiences authority structures were:</p> <p>decentralized/ nonhierarchical</p> <p>centralized/ hierarchical</p> 	
2	<p>During my career advancement experiences roles were:</p> <p>nonspecialized/ no explicit job descriptions</p> <p>specialized/ explicit job descriptions</p> 	
3	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in textbook selection</p> <p>no autonomy in textbook selection</p> 	
4	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> <p>no autonomy in generating educational goals for their classrooms</p> 	
5	<p>During my career advancement experiences individual teachers had:</p> <p>full autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> <p>no autonomy in selecting instructional strategies</p> 	

6	<p>During my career advancement experiences students were:</p> <p>encouraged to participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> <p>discouraged from participate in and taking ownership of their education</p> 	
7	<p>During my career advancement experiences Teachers obtained resources through:</p> <p>individual competition/ negotiation</p> <p>administrative allotment/ allocation</p> 	
8	<p>During my career advancement experiences Instruction was:</p> <p>individualized/ personalized for each student</p> <p>not individualized/ personalized for each student</p> 	
9	<p>During my career advancement experiences Individual teachers were motivated by:</p> <p>intrinsic/ self-defined interests</p> <p>extrinsic/ institutional rewards</p> 	

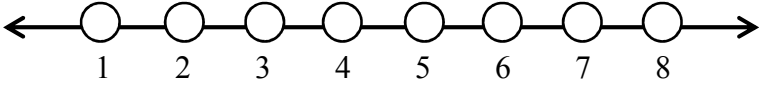
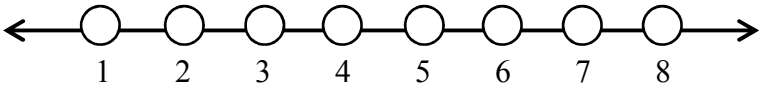
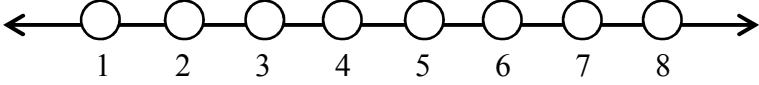
10	<p>During my career advancement experiences hiring decisions were:</p> <p>decentralized/ controlled by teachers</p> <p>centralized/ controlled by administrator(s)</p> 	
11	<p>During my career advancement experiences Master Schedules were determined through:</p> <p>Individual teacher negotiation</p> <p>institutional rules/ routines</p> 	
12	<p>During my career advancement experiences rules and procedures were:</p> <p>few/implicit</p> <p>numerous/explicit</p> 	
<p>Sum of grid scores: _____</p> <p>Average of grid scores (sum/12): _____</p>		

Figure E.2. Cultural Preference, Group

APPENDIX F

Cultural Assessment Tool Survey Weakest/Strongest Grid/Group Items

4. Roles are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	non-specialized:specialized	0	0	0	2	0	10	9	2	23	6.39

Statistic	non-specialized:specialized
Min Value	4
Max Value	8
Mean	6.39
Variance	0.98
Standard Deviation	0.99
Total Responses	23

12. Hiring decisions are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	decentralized/ controlled by teachers:centralized/ controlled by administrators	0	0	0	1	2	1	3	16	23	7.35

Statistic	decentralized/ controlled by teachers:centralized/ controlled by administrators
Min Value	4
Max Value	8
Mean	7.35
Variance	1.42
Standard Deviation	1.19
Total Responses	23

Figure 5.2: Strongest ranked grid items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Hudson High School: Corporate

8. Students are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	encouraged to take ownership of their own education:discouraged from taking ownership of their own education	10	4	6	0	0	2	0	1	23	2.43

Statistic	encouraged to take ownership of their own education:discouraged from taking ownership of their own education
Min Value	1
Max Value	8
Mean	2.43
Variance	3.62
Standard Deviation	1.90
Total Responses	23

Figure 5.3: Weakest ranked grid item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Hudson High School: Corporate

24. Educators and students have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	no allegiance/ loyalty to school: much allegiance/ loyalty to school	√0	√2	√0	√3	√1	√10	√4	√3	23	5.78

Statistic	no allegiance/ loyalty:much allegiance/ loyalty
Min Value	2
Max Value	8
Mean	5.78
Variance	2.72
Standard Deviation	1.65
Total Responses	23

25. Responsibilities of teachers and administrators are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	ambiguous/ fragmented with noaccountability:clear/communal with much accountability	√0	√1	√0	√0	√2	√9	√8	√3	23	6.35

Statistic	ambiguous/ fragmented with no accountability:clear/communal with much accountability
Min Value	2
Max Value	8
Mean	6.35
Variance	1.60
Standard Deviation	1.27
Total Responses	23

Figure 5.4: Strongest ranked group items on the Cultural assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Hudson High School: Corporate

17. Extrinsic rewards primarily benefit:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	The individual:everyone at the school site	✓4	✓2	✓4	✓3	✓4	✓4	✓2	✓0	23	3.91

Statistic	the individual:everyone at the school site
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	3.91
Variance	3.90
Standard Deviation	1.98
Total Responses	23

Figure 5.5: Weakest ranked group item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Hudson High School: Corporate

3. Authority structures are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	decentralized /non-hierarchical:centralized/hierarchical	0	0	0	0	0	3	3	0	6	6.50

Statistic	decentralized /non-hierarchical:centralized/hierarchical
Min Value	6
Max Value	7
Mean	6.50
Variance	0.30
Standard Deviation	0.55
Total Responses	6

12. Hiring decisions are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	decentralized/controlled by teachers:centralized/controlled by administrators	0	0	0	0	1	0	2	3	6	7.17

Statistic	decentralized/ controlled by teachers:centralized/controlled by administrators
Min Value	5
Max Value	8
Mean	7.17
Variance	1.37
Standard Deviation	1.17
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.7: Strongest ranked grid items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Brown High School: Bureaucratic

8. Students are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	encouraged to take ownership of their own education:discouraged from taking ownership of their own education	0	3	0	2	0	1	0	0	6	3.33

Statistic	encouraged to take ownership of their own education:discouraged from taking ownership of their own education
Min Value	2
Max Value	6
Mean	3.33
Variance	2.67
Standard Deviation	1.63
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.8: Weakest ranked grid item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Brown High School: Bureaucratic

16. Educators' socialization and work are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	separate/ dichotomous activities:incorporated/ united activities	✓0	✓2	✓3	✓1	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	6	2.83

Statistic	separate/ dichotomous activities:incorporated/ united activities
Min Value	2
Max Value	4
Mean	2.83
Variance	0.57
Standard Deviation	0.75
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.9: Weakest ranked group item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Brown High School: Bureaucratic

24. Educators and students have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	no allegiance/ loyalty:much allegiance/ loyalty	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓1	✓0	✓1	✓2	✓2	6	6.67

Statistic	no allegiance/ loyalty to school:much allegiance/ loyalty to the school
Min Value	4
Max Value	8
Mean	6.67
Variance	2.27
Standard Deviation	1.51
Total Responses	6

25. Responsibilities of teachers and administrators are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	ambiguous/ fragmented no accountability:clear/ much accountability	✓0	✓2	✓0	✓0	✓2	✓1	✓1	✓0	6	4.50

Statistic	ambiguous/ fragmented no accountability:clear/ much accountability
Min Value	2
Max Value	7
Mean	4.50
Variance	4.30
Standard Deviation	2.07
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.10: Strongest ranked group items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Brown High School: Bureaucratic

7. Individual teachers have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	Full autonomy in strategies: no autonomy in strategies	4	1	0	0	0	0	1	0	6	2.17

Statistic	full autonomy in selecting instructional strategies: no autonomy in selecting strategies
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	2.17
Variance	5.77
Standard Deviation	2.40
Total Responses	6

8. Students are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	encouraged to take ownership of education: discouraged from taking ownership of education	3	2	0	0	0	1	0	0	6	2.17

Statistic	encouraged to take ownership of their own education: discouraged from taking ownership
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.17
Variance	3.77
Standard Deviation	1.94
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.12: Weakest ranked grid items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Wilson Academy High School: Collectivist

4. Roles are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	non-specialized:specialized	0	1	0	1	0	2	2	0	6	5.33

Statistic	non-specialized:specialized
Min Value	2
Max Value	7
Mean	5.33
Variance	3.87
Standard Deviation	1.97
Total Responses	6

9. Teachers obtain instructional resources (technology, manipulatives, materials, tools) through:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	individual competition:administrative allotment	0	0	1	1	0	2	1	1	6	5.67

Statistic	individual competition:administrative allotment
Min Value	3
Max Value	8
Mean	5.67
Variance	3.47
Standard Deviation	1.86
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.13: Strongest ranked grid items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Wilson Academy High School: Collectivist

24. Educators and students have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	no allegiance/ loyalty to the school:much allegiance/ loyalty to the school	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓1	✓1	✓4	6	7.50

Statistic	no allegiance/ loyalty to the school:much allegiance/ loyalty to the school
Min Value	6
Max Value	8
Mean	7.50
Variance	0.70
Standard Deviation	0.84
Total Responses	6

26. Most decisions are made:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	privately by factions:corporately by consensus	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓1	✓2	✓2	✓1	6	6.50

Statistic	privately by factions or independent verdict:corporately by consensus or group approval
Min Value	5
Max Value	8
Mean	6.50
Variance	1.10
Standard Deviation	1.05
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.14: Strongest ranked group items on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Wilson Academy High School: Collectivist.

14. Rules and procedures are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	few/implicit:numerous/explicit	1	2	0	3	0	0	0	0	6	2.83

Statistic	few/implicit:numerous/explicit
Min Value	1
Max Value	4
Mean	2.83
Variance	1.77
Standard Deviation	1.33
Total Responses	6

Figure 5.15: Weakest ranked group item on the Cultural Assessment Tool (Harris, 2015) for Wilson Academy High School: Collectivist

APPENDIX G

Cultural Preference Survey Tool Strongest/Weakest Grid/Group Items

4. I prefer a work environment where my role(s) is:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	non-specialized:specialized	0	0	1	2	1	2	3	1	10	5.70

Statistic	non-specialized:specialized
Min Value	3
Max Value	8
Mean	5.70
Variance	2.68
Standard Deviation	1.64
Total Responses	10

9. I prefer a work environment where teachers obtain instructional resources (technology, manipulatives, materials, tools) through:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	individual competition:administrative allotment	0	0	0	1	2	4	3	0	10	5.90

Statistic	individual competition:administrative allotment
Min Value	4
Max Value	7
Mean	5.90
Variance	0.99
Standard Deviation	0.99
Total Responses	10

Figure 5.16: Strongest preferred grid items on the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015) for all respondents.

7. I prefer a work environment where individual teachers have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	autonomy in selecting instructional strategies:no autonomy in selecting instructional strategies	2	3	2	1	1	1	0	0	10	2.90

Statistic	autonomy in selecting instructional strategies:no autonomy in selecting instructional strategies
Min Value	1
Max Value	6
Mean	2.90
Variance	2.77
Standard Deviation	1.66
Total Responses	10

8. I prefer a teaching and learning environment where students are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	encouraged to take ownership of their own education:discouraged from taking ownership of their own education	5	0	2	1	1	0	1	0	10	2.70

Statistic	encouraged to take ownership of their education:discouraged from taking ownership
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	2.70
Variance	4.46
Standard Deviation	2.11
Total Responses	10

Figure 5.17: Weakest preferred grid items on the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015) for all respondents.

20. I prefer a work environment where members work:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	in isolation toward goals and objectives:collaboratively toward goals and objectives	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓1	✓1	✓4	✓4	10	7.10

Statistic	in isolation toward goals and objectives:collaboratively toward goals and objectives
Min Value	5
Max Value	8
Mean	7.10
Variance	0.99
Standard Deviation	0.99
Total Responses	10

24. I prefer a work environment where educators and students have:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	no allegiance to the school:much allegiance to the school	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓0	✓1	✓0	✓1	✓8	10	7.60

Statistic	no allegiance/ loyalty to the school:much allegiance/ loyalty to the school
Min Value	5
Max Value	8
Mean	7.60
Variance	0.93
Standard Deviation	0.97
Total Responses	10

Figure 5.18: Strongest preferred group items on the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015) for all respondents.

16. I prefer a work environment where educators' socialization and work are:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	separate/ dichotomous activities:incorporated/ united activities	✓1	✓0	✓2	✓0	✓1	✓3	✓3	✓0	10	5.10

Statistic	separate/ dichotomous activities:incorporated/ united activities
Min Value	1
Max Value	7
Mean	5.10
Variance	4.32
Standard Deviation	2.08
Total Responses	10

19. I prefer a work environment where teaching performance is evaluated according to:

#	Question	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	Total Responses	Mean
1	individual teacher goals and criteria:group goals and criteria	✓0	✓1	✓2	✓2	✓3	✓2	✓0	✓0	10	4.30

Statistic	individual teacher goals, priorities, and criteria:group goals, priorities, and criteria
Min Value	2
Max Value	6
Mean	4.30
Variance	1.79
Standard Deviation	1.34
Total Responses	10

Figure 5.19: Weakest preferred group items on the Cultural Preference Tool (Harris, 2015) for all respondents.

APPENDIX H

Table H.1 Alignment of Research and Interview Questions

Research Questions	Interview Questions
How does the cultural context of the school promote and inhibit the advancement of educators?	1, 2, 3, 4, 6, 7
What role, if any, does cultural preference play in career advancement?	5, 6, 7
How can educators adapt or align their advancement efforts according to their school's distinct cultural environment?	6, 8
What other findings relative to the research purpose exist outside of the grid and group framework?	6, 7, 8

VITA

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Professional Memberships:

TULSA ASSOCIATION of SECONDARY PRINCIPALS, 2012 to current

GOLDEN KEY INTERNATIONAL HONOR SOCIETY, Magnum Cum Laude, 2009

